HEROES ON FILM

LIVE ACTION SUPERHEROES OF FILM AND TV!

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GODZILLA VS. ULTRAMAN!

HEROES ON FILM

ISSUE #3 - JUNE 1996

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EDITORIAL

HOF staffers Damon Foster, Rajar Shy and August Ragone.

After having written about Asian films & TV shows in my other rag Oriental Cinema for so long, working on this here Heroes on Film has proven to be a breath of fresh air, a real change of pace! Indeed, the idea of doing a zine on all the world's live action superheroes has turned over some fascinating stones. A whole new world has been opened up to me. While a good percentage of HOF's readers are either longtime OC readers or more fans of Far Eastern heroes, there have been others offering to write about the likes of Robinhood, The Lone Ranger, Dick Tracy, Dr. Who, Hercules and other characters that I never personally considered superheroes. At first, my reaction was to say, "Hell no!" But on second thought, are these characters a type of superhero or not? I immediately excluded Dr. Who; aside from being just some annoying old British scientist, there's a big enough Dr. Who fandom to support that scene. However, I jumped at the chance to make The Lone Ranger a part of HOF! I always loved the heroic efforts of Clayton Moore & Jay Silverheels; they were such likable (without being sappy or campy) characters, and they got into plenty of fist-fights. The Lone Ranger wore a mask, which preserved enough mystique to make him seem almost superhuman, so in his own way, I guess he qualifies as a superhero. As for Dick Tracy, I always considered him more of a detective, and Hercules & Robinhood are more like folk heroes than superheroes. But then, I'm being opinionated-- perhaps I shouldn't exclude something or consider it a "non superhero" just because I don't care for it. This debate will never end, as to what a superhero really is or isn't, but I welcome opinions from other readers.

Personally, my definition of a superhero is somebody who either has superhuman powers, wears a silly costume or both. Naturally, traditional heroes like Superman, Ultraman, Batman, Kamen Rider, Wonder Woman and Kikaida are prime examples. I also think that normal humans who wear masks (i.e. Mexican wrestlers, Zorro, The Lone Ranger, Rocketman, Kai Ketsu Zubat, etc.) also qualify as superheroes. However, The Three Musketeers, Robinhood, Hercules, do not-- in my opinion. But for the meantime, the debate remains open, and HOF's format & subject matter will remain experimental. I'm open to accepting articles on genres which are new to me or unique, especially ones so obscure that they're harder to find than a Christmas Tree in Israel.

Sincerely Mine, Damon (HOF Editor) Foster

Send Comments to Damon Foster, P.O. Box 576, Fremont, CA 94537-0576

obituaries

Unfortunately, three important Japanese men, without who's influence this magazine just might not exist, have been visited by that most dreaded of killers: Death! The Grim Reaper has claimed the lives of Noboru Tsuburaya, Minoru Yamada and Hajime Sato. You may not be familiar with the names, but chances are, without knowing it, you were impressed or touched by their work at one time or another.

Producer Noboru Tsuburaya passed away on June 11, 1995 from stomach cancer. The second son of Eiji Tsuburaya was a director/producer for Fuji TV from 1958, and left in the early '60s to work for his father at Tsuburaya Productions, founding Tsuburaya Enterprises, the company's merchandising arm. In 1973, when company CEO and elder brother Hajime passed away (having taken over when their father died three years earlier), Noboru took the reins of Tsuburaya Productions over. After many controversial years as its head (many claiming that the salad days of the company were over), Noboru masterminded a huge merchandising blitz in the late '70s which took several years to explode. And explode it did. Without any new Ultra programs, Noboru was able to make Japanese children of the '80s push the ratings of Ultra Series reruns into continued success, and compete with modern shows from Toei! 30 year-old reruns of the original ULTRAMAN are still going strong in Japan (some kids even think it's a new show!). No longer nostalgia, Ultraman is eternal. And so is the memory of Noboru Tsuburaya. The man who saved Tsuburaya Productions.

Director Minoru Yamada died on August 25, 1995, of cancer (cancer is the number one cause of death in Japan) at the age of 69 years. Born on June 33, 1926, he began directing for Toei in 1965. Listing all the programs he directed would take forever, but it includes episodes of JOHNNY SOKKO AND HIS FLYING ROBOT, CAPTAIN ULTRA, AKUMA KUN, several Kamen Rider programs & featurettes, and even some Sentais-- in fact the last series he directed was 1988's LIVEMAN, he retired there-after. He also directed some adult crime dramas, including episodes of Sonny Chiba's KEY HUNTER and PLAY GIRL.

Director Hajime Sato went up to a much better place on May 10, 1995 of intestinal cancer at the age of 66. Sato was one of the more eccentric of fantasy directors and produced a number of gems including THE HEARSE ARRIVES THRICE (Sanpo-suru Reikusha), GHOST STORY: THE HUNCHBACK (Kaidan Semushi-Otoko), GOLDEN BAT (Ogon Batto), TERROR BENEATH THE SEA (Kaitei Daisenso), and the amazing BODYSNATCHER FROM HELL (Kyukesuki Gokemidoro). He also directed a number of TV series including the sci-fi actioner CAPTAIN ULTRA. His interesting composition, camera angles and lighting will be missed. He was definately one of my favorite directors.

Tamao of OH-RANGER

LETTERS

Dear Damon,

I'm doing something which I thought I'd never do... writing a letter to you. Some time ago, I bought your Godzilla issue of OC. I couldn't believe the level of nastiness on your part upon the reviews, reviewers and everything else. My first thought was, this guy is a complete frustrated jerk. I can't say 'idiot', because your comments were not stupid and I could see some knowledge, but the aggressiveness was incredible. To the point where it was not enjoyable to read. My reaction was... I'll neve buy anything else written by this guy.

Then in April, I'm in New Jersey for the Chiller Theatre Con. While in N.Y. City in the afternoon I pick up your newest magazine HEROES ON FILM. I've always been crazy about superheroes, and although I've collected comic books for many years in my youth, 3-d live action films and TV series are what I like best. I've spent the glorious 1960s (for TV) watching all the superheroes produced, and was often going to all the SF, horror & fantasy movies I could see. Japanese productions always brought something special to me. Godzilla is my #1 idol since my teens, and still is.

Living in Montreal (probably one of the largest cultural melting pot cities of North America), we get practically everything that comes out in the USA, plus a great deal

(continued on page 36)

ULTRA-SCAN

REVIVING THE THRILLS OF ULTRAMAN

PART 2

Continuing where the previous edition of Ultra Scan (in HOF#2) left off, here's part 2 of our in-depth look at what's arguably the most important superhero TV series ever made: The original ULTRAMAN (TBS; 1966). For this edition, we're concentrating on the little-known American press-release material from United Artists TV, who released the brilliant program to America some time in the late 1960s. Unfortunately, I don't have an original pressbook on the series, but managed to obtain a multi-gen (a copy of a copy of a copy) xerox of it from Rajar Shy. Though the photos lost a lot of detail (to the point of being nearly unledgible), most of the type was still possible to read.

The covers state "ULTRA MAN: Adventures of the Protector of the World-- Promotion/ Advertising/Publicity" and "Television's most promotable shows come from United Artist's Television."

It's no coincidence that the cover features Kira/Jiras, since the creature is obviously a Godzilla costume, and Godzilla is mentioned in the press stuff more than once, when promoting & recommending ULTRAMAN. The immediate inside page has a description of ten 10-second announcements, followed by a page introducing the basic series, as follows:

Next up was a couple of pages of ten 10-second announcements and five 20-second announcements for which ever TV station chooses to air ULTRAMAN, the title of which they split into two words, ULTRA MAN:

"Coming soon on Channel ____, day at P.M. ULTRA MAN! See ULTRA MAN face the strange creatures that would destroy us all. See ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World!"

"See ULTRA MAN battle weird creatures from beneath the Earth, from Outer Space and far away planets...on ULTRA MAN, Channel at ___ pm."

"A weird monster leaves a path of destruction until the giant Protector of the World appears on ULTRA MAN. See ULTRA MAN, today at __pm."

ULTRA MAN

Protector of the World

STARRING

ULTRA MAN, himself

From a distant galaxy comes giant ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World, on the trail of a fugitive from Space. He joins forces with a member of the Scientific Investigation Agency's combat team. The SIA's mission: Seek and destroy the huge, strange, aggressive enemies of Earth.

In each program, ULTRA MAN materializes at the climax of an unusual, action-packed adventure. The series features futuristic equipment and weaponry in amazing scenes of destruction and devastation. Brilliant camera and production techniques make every story an eye-filling, thrilling television experience.

Awesome, Compelling, Earthshaking Conflict!

Mammoth creatures—grotesque, weird, horrendous, many-stories high—appear from the far reaches of outer space... from the mysterious depths of the Earth...from the murky Deep. Raging, ferocious and seemingly invincible, these monsters try to destroy our world. In earthshaking hand-to-hand battle, the Protector of the World thwarts these enemies...and the SIA and mankind are saved, to face the next dangerous adventure.

LOCALE

Power stations, city streets, mountain tops, beneath the Earth, underwater, in the air, SIA headquarters.

FORMAT

—half-hours, with identifications at start and finish and 3 60-second commercials.

IN COLOR

"Who is ULTRA MAN? ... What is he?... Where does he come from?... Why did he come here? ULTRAMAN in action, on this channel, day, at __pm."

"Mysterious objects and strange plants are really grotesque monsters from another Time, another Place on ULTRA MAN! Watch ULTRA MAN today at __pm."

"See the Protector of the World, ULTRA MAN, put an end to another evil monster stalking our world. Watch ULTRA MAN day on channel ___ at __pm."

"What new raging creature will rise up from beneath the ground.. or fall from Outer Space? Can ULTRA MAN save humanity once more? Find out day on this channel at _pm."

On ULTRA MAN, _day_ the combat team faces the most grotesque and savage world-destroyer they have ever beheld! See this thrilling adventure on ULTRA MAN day at __pm."

"Awesome adventure comes your way on ULTRA MAN, today! The Protector of the World comes to Channel ___ this morning/ afternoon at ___.

"There's ultra excitement, ultra suspense in store when Danger! Horror! Terror! challenge ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World next _day at ____pm."

"There's pulsating excitement on ULTRA

MAN... See strange sights and fierce fights on ULTRA MAN... When all seems lost and the world is doomed, that's when ULTRA MAN comes to the rescue... Watch ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World-- in Color __(day)__ on Channel ____ at _____ pm."

"Neronga, Balton, Bemler and the other horrid monsters meet ULTRA MAN in hand-to-hand combat!... See ULTRA MAN save the world again, as a new threat to mankind raises its terrible head, and tries to crush everything in it. Watch this all happen, in color- __(day)__ on ULTRA MAN at __pm."

"You have never seen the Forces of Evil in such grotesque forms as they appear on ULTRA MAN!... Gigantic, fierce monsters tear up mountains! Crush cities! See the whole world crumble under the blows of these dangerous creatures, until ULTRA MAN appears! Watch ULTRA MAN in color-here, today at __pm."

"Watch a terrifying new world of Fantasy come alive on ULTRA MAN- in color! See the heroic SIA battle grotesque monsters from Outer Space, from beneath the Earth and from the Deep. See ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World, challenge them on this channel, at __pm., __(day)__."

"ULTRA MAN! A half hour of earth-shaking action... battles between ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World, and his monstrous opponents. See the most furious combat on TV in scenes of chaos and suspense... a world plagued by fire, flood, and earthquake. See it all happen- in color- on ULTRA MAN __(day)__, on this channel, at pm."

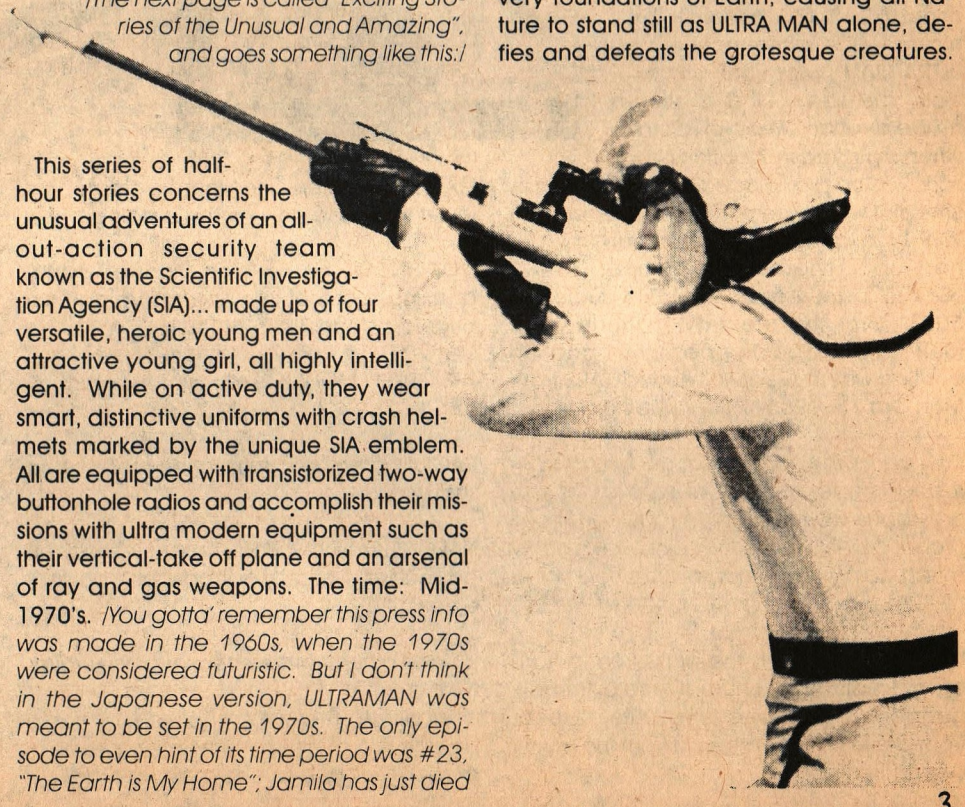
Following those pages came a page on Eiji Tsuburaya titled ULTRA MAN: A PRODUCTION MASTERPIECE:

"Competing with the young heroes and heroine (the Science Investigation Agents) */Perhaps this old press release was made before the official English name became "Science Patrol". -DF/* of this series is an unusually believable array of synthetic monsters, special effects and miniaturized scenery. These dramatic elements are the product of one of the most inventive talents in the TV industry, the highly creative Eiji Tsuburaya, master of special effects and theatrical photographic techniques.

Mr. Tsuburaya's first love was aviation. However, he became fascinated with trick photography and decided to devote his life to its study and development. He rocketed to prominence in his chosen field, some years later, with the popular and widely-acclaimed film "Godzilla". He went on to make many science fiction and war movies for the Toho Motion Picture Company before establishing his own company, Tsuburaya Productions (TBS). */Actually, TBS stands for Tokyo Broadcasting Service, the original Japanese TV station that aired the show. -DF/* In the TBS Studios, Mr. Tsuburaya created ULTRA MAN. The series went on the air in Tokyo at 7:00pm, Sundays, against four well-established, competing shows. In the first forty weeks of 1966, it beat all competition every week, with an average weekly rating of 32.9 as compared to 11.1,8.4,10.4 and 13.9 for the other shows...a runaway success!

Mr. Tsuburaya's extensive experience, painstaking artistry and inventiveness dominate this unique series. The millions of American television fans who see ULTRA MAN will experience new entertainment thrills while witnessing whole cities, powerplants, airlines, railroads, ships, mountains, lakes and seas being shattered by fire, flood, explosion, quake and the ponderous fury of strange monsters. These imaginative, huge-seeming, fantastic creatures- stalk and fume thru the action in a most believable way - each a tribute to Mr. Tsuburaya's active imagination. Their variety is endless - some seem to derive from the tyrannosaurus of the primordial plains - soem seem akin to the pteradactyl that flew the steamy prehistoric air - others appear to have risen from the murky deep. We see horned, scaled, armoured, winded, fanged, fire-breathing, bolt-throwing, roaring creatures, all magnificently designed and articulated for life-like action and dramatized for engrossing entertainment."

/The next page is called "Exciting Stories of the Unusual and Amazing", and goes something like this:/



This series of half-hour stories concerns the unusual adventures of an all-out-action security team known as the Scientific Investigation Agency (SIA)... made up of four versatile, heroic young men and an attractive young girl, all highly intelligent. While on active duty, they wear smart, distinctive uniforms with crash helmets marked by the unique SIA emblem. All are equipped with transistorized two-way buttonhole radios and accomplish their missions with ultra modern equipment such as their vertical-take off plane and an arsenal of ray and gas weapons. The time: Mid-1970's. */You gotta' remember this press info was made in the 1960s, when the 1970s were considered futuristic. But I don't think in the Japanese version, ULTRAMAN was meant to be set in the 1970s. The only episode to even hint of its time period was #23, "The Earth is My Home"; Jamila has just died and his grave reads 1960-1993. -DF/*

Whenever the SIAgents find themselves hopelessly overpowered or outnumbered by adversaries, one of the team transforms himself - unknown to his colleagues - into ULTRA MAN. He accomplishes this feat with the aid of a "Beta Capsule" which he carries at all times. The capsule came into his possession when a gigantic man from another constellation accidently collided with the SIA plane, almost causing the SIAgent's death. To make amends for the accident, and to help the SIAgent in his work on Earth, the super giant allows the young hero to assume his form and power as ULTRA MAN for a limited length of time, in dire emergencies. This gives the SIAgents a better chance of accomplishing each mission. The enemies of ULTRA MAN and the SIA are, usually, either dormant relics from Earth's prehistoric ages or weird visitors from outer space. These creatures spring from egg shells, becterial cells, sundry vegatative forms, lightning bolts or magnetic fields.. or they may rise full-grown from beneath the Earth or from the ocean's murky depths. They have one thing in common: A berserk capacity to destroy and kill... From time to time, however, some such beast is benevolent, siding with the Earthlings against other marauders. Despite the SIA's superior intelligence, wily strategems and ingenious weapons, the monsters are usually invulnerable and unstopable, as they crush cities, pulverize mountains and turn rivers from their courses.

Then ULTRA MAN appears! Savage hand-to-hand combat ensues which shakes the very foundations of Earth, causing all Nature to stand still as ULTRA MAN alone, defies and defeats the grotesque creatures.

In these battles, the suspense builds because ULTRA MAN's superior power only lasts a few short minutes-- and as it ends, we see a warning light flash in a jewel he wears on his chest.

\Next page, titled, "Who Will Watch... and Why?"-DF/

EVERYBODY will watch ULTRA MAN... There is exciting entertainment and a lot of intriguing things to see in this series. ULTRAMAN presents lively, dynamic SCIENCE FICTION that has a strong appeal for all ages of viewers... plenty of special effects, optical illusions and intriguing camera techniques. Fascinating new vehicles and weapons make the action colorful and eye-filling... planes with vertical take-off...ray and gas guns... lethal electronic projectiles... invincible tanks and weapons-carriers... man-made lightning bolts...

Miniaturized cities, countrysides, factories, powerplants and rolling-stock scaled down to enhance the size of ULTRA MAN and his fierce opponents - have the arresting charm and believability of Gulliver's Lilliputians. Grown-ups love this kind of dramatic effect... it adds impact to the "battle of Titans" which climaxes in every story. ALL BRAND NEW!... ULTRAMAN has new stories, new performers, new locales and a new experience in TV enjoyment.

The record proves the success on TV of this kind of programming. "Godzilla", a feature film made in the same manner by ULTRA MAN's producer, with exactly the same kind of story, made a clean sweep of ratings when it played in 7-station New York... "Godzilla" placed Number One in its time-slot with a great 20.7 on independent WPR-TV, a good 25% better than the runners-up... share of audience: 35%... "Godzilla" increased WOR-TV's audience 300% over the preceding quarter-hour (5.0)... the station dropped to 4.7 and 4th position when "Godzilla" ended! (ARBitron, Mon Oct 13, 1958- 7:30-9:00pm.)

/At about this point, things get kind of confusing; since my actual xeroxes of the pressbook weren't stapled together in any proper order, so from this point on, I'm pretty much doing it at random. The next page (?) tells of the program's monsters:/

ULTRA MAN protects the world from a variety of fascinating, unusual, and extremely dangerous creatures from Outer Space, from beneath the Earth and from the murky Deep.

BEMLER, a hideous fugitive from Outer Space bent on destroying all in its path...

GUESRA, the giant caterpillar */Huh?-DF/* that feeds on cacao beans and the DIAMOND KICK GANG, smugglers extraordinary...

ANTLAR, horned monster of the Magnetic Seven-Colored Light Beam...

MAGLLA, creature from beneath the Earth that moves mountains.

SFRAN, the weird plant monster...

GABORA, inhabitant of uranium deposits, who lives on U-235 - his weapon: radioactivity...

GIRASS, huge frenzied paleolithic lake-creature that was nurtured by a scientist...

TBSが番組宣伝のために製作した絵はがき

GANGO, the Meteorite Monster, created by jewel thieves to do their evil bidding...

DODONGO, the Skeleton Monster, earthquaking, boulder-throwing guardian of a priceless deposit of rare fossils...

THE GREEN MONSTER, carnivorous plant giant...

RAGON, prehistoric submarine creature - a shipwrecker...

NARONGO, hihg-voltage creature, feeds off powerlines - attacks with deadly bolts of electricity...

.....and other strange enemies of the world.

/What followed are complete plotlines in an episode guide to the whole series. For proper titles of each episode, see H.O.F.'s second issue. The only thing I'm really changing is that, for some reason they labled episode #1 "Program 1001", episode #2 seems to be called "Program 1002", episode #3 is "Program 1003", etc. We die-hard ULTRAMAN fans are obsessed with the series enough to know that there were only 39 episodes, not 1039! So I'm refering to each episode by it's correct number. Each page also originally included listings of the characters to appear in each episode, but it's the same thing over & over: The SIA Science Patrol members (where they call the leader "Commander Muramatsu"), plus what ever guest star-- i.e. "The Spaceman", and "Onoyama, A Sailor" and "Diamond Kick". I'm running out of time & patience typing all this up, but I'll try and be complete, but I imagine after listing the cast and typing "Hayata (Ultraman)" and "Commander Muramashi" (aka Capt. Mura) over and over, I'll get a little pissed off. Equally annoying is that not all of these plot synopsises are entirely accurate. Having watched & accurately critiqued each & every episode last issue, I think I know the show better than whoever the hell typed up these scripts. -DF/

PROGRAM #1:
SIA Science Patrol members: HAYATA, COMMANDER MURAMASHI, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and THE SPACEMAN

Two sphere-shaped lights, one red and one blue, appear in the night sky. The Science Patrolmen sight them and pilot Hayata speeds to the scene in his vertical-ascent plane. However, he collides with a red sphere as it chases the blue one, which lands in a nearby lake. Hearing of Hayata's collision, Commander Muramatsu and his Science Patrol hurry to the scene. Hayata's nowhere to be found. According to lakeside witnesses, the red light enveloped the unconscious Hayata, carrying him aloft. Meanwhile, inside the red sphere, a giant spaceman from Constellation M-78 apoligizes to Hayata for the collision, offering him his great powers. He gives the young Science Patrolman a "Beta Capsule" which enables him - in an emergency - to change his form to that of the spaceman. The giant spaceman and Hayata unite as one being, to protect the world from injustice and disorder, as ULTRA MAN. Bemlar arises from the depths of the lake and starts to create havoc. The Science Patrol attack Bemlar and, with their superguns, drive him back into the lake. He tries to escape on land, and wrecks the

attacking amphibious submarine containing Hayata, injuring him. Hayata reaches for the Beta Capsule which the giant spaceman gave him. There's a flash... and there, challenging Bemlar, stands ULTRA MAN! Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #2

SIA Science Patrol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY, HOSHINO

An unidentified flying object hovers over the city. Then it disapears from the radar screen and reports are received that it landed at the Scientific Technical Center. Science Patrol Commander Muramatsu sends Arashi to investigate. Upon arrival at the Center he discovers everyone turned into stone-like figures. When he encounters a strange creature, the same fate befalls Arashi. Reports reveal that rays from a creature with powers to duplicate itself are responsible. Space Patrol Commander Muramatsu sends Hayata and Ito to confer with the creature. To communicate, the creature, Baltan, takes on Patrolman Arashi's form and so can now speak as a human being. Baltan tells how his home planet was destroyed while he was away on a space mission. He and millions of similar highly intelligent inhabitant from the planet have become space vagabonds. Discovering Earth and its suitability for colonization these "vagabonds", transmuted to the size of bacteria, wait to disembark from their hovering spacecraft. Hayata realizes that Baltan and his fellow-creatures intend to take over Earth. As Baltan starts to destroy the city with his scissor-like arms, ULTRA MAN appears to challenge him...! Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #3

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

Science Patroller Fuji, and her brother, Hoshino, go to investigate an old well from which strange rumbling noises are rumored to have been heard. Filled with curiosity, Hoshino climbs down the well and comes to a passageway leading off from the well's dry bottom. Stealthily, he walks into its dark recesses. Suddenly, the eye of a huge creature peers at him from ahead, filling the whole passageway. Hoshino is petrified. Fuji, worried about his safety follows Hoshino. At that moment, the whole passage shudders and shakes as falling debris seals off the passageway ahead. Meanwhile, the hills surrounding the nearby power station start caving in. The monster Neronga appears and starts feeding off the current of the station's high- voltage cables. Usually invisible, the monster becomes visible after consuming electrical energy. (The horrendous animal had reamined dormant in the hills for thousands of years until the power station's cables had disturbed it, providing its essential energy.) Science Patrol Commander Muramatsu, anticipating Neronga's next move, flies his team to the power station in an effort to head him off. Hoshino and Fuji, rescued from their underground tomb, join the Science Patrol. Hoshino, surrecptitiously takes a new ray gun from SIA headquaters and steals out to the power station's complex, to await Neronga. As the colossus comes into view, Hoshino fires the ray gun. Maddened, Neronga rips and crushes the power lines & towers. The Science Patrol's efforts prove useless against the horrible animal. They retreat. Hoshino addicentally falls into the monster's path. The monster sees Hoshino lying helpless and is about to approach when, suddenly, ULTRA MAN appears! Created & produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #4

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

A rocket, loaded with six atomic bombs and bound for a station in outer space, crashes in the Pacific Ocean. Five of the bombs are recovered but one is missing. Naval vessels search for it underwater. A mysterious creature, meanwhile, sinks a patrol ship. The only survivor of the crew murmurs something about seeing "the wake of someting..." Fuji sees a giant wave of white foam, out as sea, and called Science Patrol headquarters. Science Patrolmen are dispatched by plane. They witness the appearance of an underwater prehistoric monster, Ragon. Dangling from his shoulder is the missing A-bomb. The Science Patrol tries to distract Ragon, but the creature continues its threatening advance. Suddenly ULTRA MAN appears and a fierce battle follows between the two of them. In the struggle, the A-bomb's safety lock is released, allowing only 20 seconds before the bomb explodes. With only five seconds left, ULTRA MAN's strength starts to ebb...! Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #5

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, and SETSUKO HAMAGUCHI

A newspaper reporter dies mysteriously on a lonely highway at night. Then, a scientist is found dead in his office. The Science Patrol is assigned to investigate these mysterious occurences. The Patrol discovers that the dead victims were all participants on a recent scientific expedition. They interview the sole survivor of the group, Miss Hamaguchi. She tells them that the expedition team had drunk the water which a certain insectivorous plant had used for nourishment. The plant had then attacked them. The team had also brought back a beautiful flower from the island. Hayata reasons that this flower, brought back from the expedition, was transmuted into the horrible plant through a charge of radio-activity. This plant had probably been attacking members of the expedition. The

Patrol amushes the monstrous plant and shoots at it with their nuclear guns. However, instead of weakening the monster, it grows larger and stronger. It goes on a rampage but suddenly ULTRA MAN appears.... Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #6

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, CHIRO, NOBUKO, ONOYAMA (A SAILOR), and DIAMOND KICK

At the waterfront, Hoshino and his friends, Chiro and Nobuko, look through binoculars. Hoshino, in the distance, recognizes the jewel smuggler, Diamond Kick, much wanted by the police. Chiro, looking in another direction, sees a fish-monster. Hoshino reports both sightings to Science Patrol Headquarters. In the meantime, the monster rises out of the sea and crushes a ship carrying cacao beans. From a sailor, the youngsters learn that the monster must have grown from an egg of the South American Guesra bug which feeds on the ship's cargo, cacao beans. Hoshino and his friends rush to the cacao bean warehouse where they run afoul of Diamond Kick and his pals, who are searching for diamonds hidden in the sacks of cacao beans. Diamond Kick ties up the kids. Reports of the monster's destructive penchant for cacao beans reach the Science Patrol. In their VTO plane, they rush to divert the monster and to find Hoshino and friends. They find them just as the monster appears on the scene. Together the Patrol and Diamond Kick try to fight off the creature, but in vain...until ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World, appears!

PROGRAM #7

SIA Science Patrol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, PRINCESS CHARTAM, and ADAM (UNITED STATES AGENT)

International scientific expeditions have gone to investigate a meteor which fell in the Middle East, and have disapeared. America's Scientific Investigating Agency headquarters sends a delegate, Adam, to SIA's Japan division to seek help. Aboard the verticle-ascent plane, Adam and the Science Patrol squad go to the site of the mysterious disapearance. Suddenly a tremendous magnetic beam pulls at their craft. Fortunately, able piloting maneuvers the plane away but the craft suffers damages. They have to make a forced landing. On foot, encountering violent sandstorms, the Science Patrol heads for the town of Valarge, but comes face-to-face with Antlar, a gigantic, horned monster. They realize that the magnetic beam came from Antlar's horn. On reaching Valarge, they discover it's a ghost town. Only a few inhabitants remain together with their beautiful princess, Chartam. She tells them that outsiders have avoided Valarge because of Antlar's threatening presence. However, the town itself was safe from Antlar through the protection of a stone statue called Ooltra. The Science Patrol discovers the statue is a likeness of ULTRA MAN. At that moment, Antlar attacks... and the real ULTRA MAN, Protector of the World, appears to challenge him. A fierce combat ensues. Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #8

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI

An observation team arrives at an uninhabited volcanic island. Then... the world loses all contact with the expedition. The Science Patrol goes in search of them. They discover that the island has, through years of natural disasters, reverted to a prehistoric state. The Patrol witnesses battles between monsters. The are attacked by the underground monster Maglla and the weird monster plant Sfran. To their surprise, another monster, Pigmon, sides with them against the creatures of horror and guides the Science Patrol to the lone survivor of the observation team. Wjem Redking, one of the hostile creatures, charges, Pigmon intervenes but falls before him. Suddenly, ULTRA MAN appears and challenges Redking to a fierce battle. Created & produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #9

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

A typhoon isolates a boys camp from the nearest town. Two of the boys start out to get food supplies. The upheaval of the earth has aroused the monster, Gabora, which feeds on uranium. Hungry, Gabora heads for the uranium stored in the neighboring town. The Science Patrol rushes to the scene, fearful that the monster will unleash the radioactivity. To trap Gabora, Hayata hangs a uranium capsule from a helicoptor and tries to lure the creature away from the town. However, as he is about to lead the distracted monster away, he discovers the two boys are in its path and stops to warn them. The monster, reaching for the baiting capsule, crushes Hayata's helicoptor... from the debris and smoke of the encounter, ULTRA MAN arises to do battle with the dangerous uranium eater. Created & produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #10

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, DR. NAKAMA, MISS KUBO (Reporter), MR. AYASHI (Reporter)

There have been reports of an unusually large run of fish in a lake similar to Loch Ness. Science Patrol members Hayata, Arashi & Ito, go investigating and find the lake quiet. Their underwater investigation shows nothing unusual. Commander Muramatsu gives them leave to take a brief holiday while they are at the lake. At the hotel, they meet two magazine reporters who have come to interview Doctor Nakama, an authority on strange and prehistoric creatures. At night, Ito and the girl reporter go fishing and see a mysterious boatman throw something in the water. They follow the boatman and find it is Dr. Nakama who has managed to create a monster he feeds in the water. The Doctor discovers the young people in his house and locks them up because they know his secret. The next day, two kids throw poison into the lake in order to kill some fish. From the depth of the lake rises the monster Keerah in furious agony and starts on a rampage. The Doctor tries to quiet it, but is himself attacked. Ito alerts the Science Patrol by radio and, after freeing him and

the reporter, the Patrol fights a losing battle to control the monster... then ULTRA MAN appears to take up the fight. Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #11
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI and DOCTOR YAMAMOTO

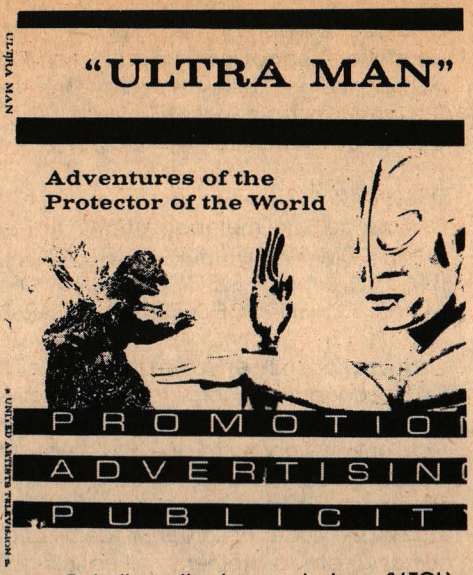
A luminous stone from Outer Space falls to Earth. Children pick it up and, to their surprise, discover that the stone changes itself into anything they imagine. When Doctor Yamamoto tests the stone, he discovers that it is a compound of elements unknown to Man...with the abilities of living matter! Onida, an evil man, learning of the stone's unusual properties, steals it from the Science Center. With the stone, Onida creates Gango, a creature he intends to help him possess the world. However, Gango goes out of control and injures its creator. With Onida unconscious, there is no one to stop the evil impulses he has implanted in Gango. The Science Patrol hurries to fight Gango and the creature attacks Hayata. Gango is about to win the uneven fight when ULTRA MAN appears.... Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

PROGRAM #12
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, and DR. IWAMOTO

Doctor Iwamoto, during a scientific excavation, discovers a mummy in a cave. The mummy is taken to the Science Center under the supervision of the Science Patrol. There Dr. Iwamoto plans to make experiments to determine the mummy's origin. That night, the mummy revives and escapes. The Science Patrol corners the mummy and the creature is wounded. At that same moment Dodongo, a dragon-like monster, emerges from the mountain where the mummy had been found. The monster seems to be searching for something and destroys whatever may be in its path. The lives of the Science Patrol members are in the balance as ULTRA MAN appears to take a hand in the unequal battle. Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE 13
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, PROFESSOR IWAMOTO the scientist, HIROKAWA (a drunk man), PILOT A, PILOT B and SIA OFFICIALS

Oil supplies throughout the world unaccountably become depleted in a series of strange catastrophes. Reports of mysterious lights at sea and monster sightings reach the SIA. Ito and Arashi fly the Science Patrol's vertical-ascent plane (V-TOL) to scout the area but discover nothing. The man who reported the monster sighting, insists that he tells the truth and that further investigations be made. Later, he's proved right, when the Patrol sees an oil tanker explode in the bay and a huge creature thrusts it beneath the waves. They theorize that the monster thrives on oil and is responsible for the world-wide oil catastrophes. Emergency measures go into effect. Hayata and the Patrol guide air transports which drop fuel drums into the bay in order to attract the elusive and dangerous beast from its murky hideout. They wait and wait. Then suddenly, he rears into view. Ito impulsively fires missiles at his huge oil-filled belly. Wounded and angered, the slimy creature spews oil all over the bay, emits a strange ray and that sets the surface ablaze. The creature charges ashore, aflame, stomping to the nearby oil refinery. The situation is hopless... until ULTRA MAN appears! Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.



EPISODE #14
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

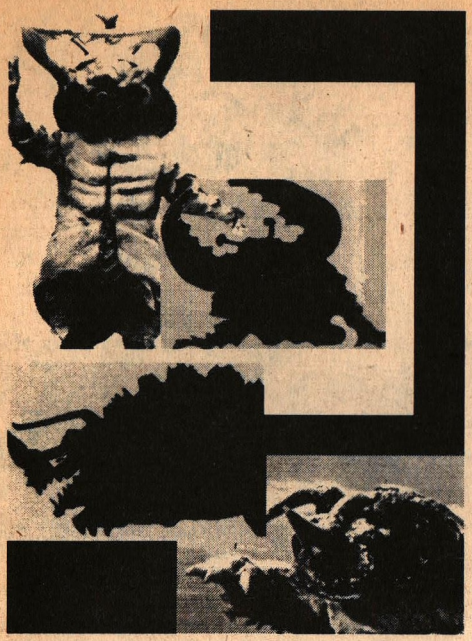
The phenomenal price of cultured pearls alarms the First Lady of the Science Patrol, Fuji. Following her woman's intuition, she uncovers the international pearl thief-- the monster Gamakujira, in a local harbor. Almost immediately, reports poor in from surrounding cities as the monster attacks woman and jewelry stores, greddily satisfying its hunger for pearls. The Science Patrol arrives on the scene. Hayata see's this is a job for ULTRA MAN and uses his Beta Capsul to make the great man materialize. It's a thrilling, chilling fight to the finish. *[Yeah, right! This episode has no fight! -DF]* Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya

EPISODE #15
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

Disturbing reports from Bombay to Washington alert the Science Patrol. Strange outer space light factors, coupled with Earth's sunlight, turn children's sketches of monsters and space creatures into the real thing! Panic strikes the populace even though the creatures are harmless and revert to being drawings, again, in the dark. Restoring world tranquility, ULTRAMAN removes the gigantic creatures to a space zoo. Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #16
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, DR. MORI, PROFESSOR IWAMOTO, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and THE BALTAN

Scientist Dr. More blasts off to Venus in the "Otari", his new rocketship. The SIA Patrol escorts him in their V TOL plane until his second stage controls take over. The Patrol returns to SIA Headquarters where, on the super TV screen, the image of Baltan - strange creatures from an alien galaxy - appears. The Baltan reveals that he survived ULTRA MAN's most recent effort to destroy his kind. Now, equipped with stronger weapons and a protective light-ray barrier, the Baltans have returned to conquer Earth. Dr. Mori reports a minor collision with a mysterious space object, but that he's unharmed and continuing on to Venus. The Patrolers think Baltans are attacking the "Otari". The only way they can reach the rocket lies in attaching Professor Iwamoto's space vehicle to the armed V TOL plane. Meanwhile, the Baltan leader takes over Dr. Mori's body while other Baltans start towards Earth. Commander



Muramatsu and the Patrolers rescue Dr. Mori, unaware he's now "possessed" by the Baltan. The fake Dr. Mori causes the plane to lose control, sending it reeling through space to far away Planet R. Realizing ULTRA MAN's too busy helping the distressed SIA Patrol, the Baltans press their ravaging attack against Earth... Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #17

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, SIR YESTERDAY (an explorer), FUKUI (Sir Yesterday's companion), DR. KAWAGUCHI and DR. YOSHI (his technician)

Explorer Sir Yesterday vanishes. SIA's London office reveals that a meteorite fell near the site of Sir Yesterday's recent expedition. He had brought back a sample, but it too, has disapeared. Arashi and Ito investigate and find Sir Yesterday lying semi-conscious outside his mansion. Revived, he tells them his fellow explorer, Fukui, has another sample of the dangerous meteorite. Arashi takes Fukui's specimen to SIA Headquarters for observation. The meteorite is examined by Dr. Kawaguchi who takes it to his laboratory. There it creates strange, fourth dimensional effects and the image of a ghostlike creature appears. Hayata and Commander Muramatsu rush to answer the emergency call. Technician Dr. Yoshi relates what happened and takes them to inspect the meteorite, now normal again. They take it to SIA Headquarters. Sir Yesterday realizes the two meteorite pieces are parts of one creature, seeking each other after separation in space. Joined, they'd wreck the world. Hoshino overhears and runs to tell Fuji to keep apart the two specimens now in SIA's vault. She ingores Hoshino's "childish game". Suddenly, SIA Headquarters goes into a fourth dimension as a giant creature looms over it. Only ULTRA MAN can resist its weird effects... Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #18

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, DR. YAMATA, MINISTERS OF DEFENSE and ZARAB

A mysterious mist envelops the entire city. SIA Headquarters records fatal radioactivity in the mist. SIA's Dr. Yamata reveals the radioactivity's not from Earth and sends out an alarm. Arashi and Ito, patroling the city's streets, tail a strange figure. Later, appearing on SIA's super TV screen, it identifies itself as Zarab, "a brother to all earthlings", assuring them he means no harm. He promises the Science Patrol much knowledge of the Universe and, as proof of his brotherhood, Zarab dissolves the dangerous mist. Then, Hayata, in the VTOL plane, sights an Earth rocket launched a month earlier to Saturn, but now, strangely trapped in Earth's orbit. Zarab explains that he helpfully brought the rocket back as it had deviated from its intended course. Hayata peers through the rocket's window... its crew, under hypnosis, is working as slaves for Zarab. Zarab suddenly appears and reveals his true mission: To erase Hayata, take his Beta Capsule and become ULTRA MAN! Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPSIODE #19

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and DR. FUKUYAMA

The Science Patrol summons the famous space scientist Dr. Fukuyama to investigate the sudden appearance of a metalic capsule at a construction site. Opening what he believes to be a time capsule, the puzzled Fukuyama struggles in vain to decipher the supposed Mu dialect inscribed inside. Alas! Too late. Already, the once liquified monsters from Prehistoric Times take form, when chance lightning strikes the red and blue liquid dripping from the capsule. Only Ultraman can hope to suppress the red creature Aleba and the blue monster Aveross. Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #20

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and UNNAMED CHILD

The Science Patrol heads for Izu Park to a watchman's report that Mount Ohmaro is electrified. There, unseen by the other members of the Science Patrol, an unidentified child tells Fuji that Hydra the Dragon will come to the mountain. Fuji investigates. She discovers that the Hydra is only a statue in the Children's zoo. It was designed by a third grade boy who was later killed in an auto accident on congested Route 87. Fuji finds a picture of the dead boy... the boy with whom she spoke! The Science Patrol makes light of Fuji's "visions". Suddenly, thousands of cars are trampled by the half-bird, half-dinosaur, Hydra. ULTRAMAN suddenly appears and engages the dragon in a fierce fight. Risking death, he unlocks the mystery of the child and the Hydra of Route 87. Created and produced by: Eiji Tsuburaya

EPISODE #21

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO

A young boy stumbles onto a flock of dead birds; two girls report glistening eyes peering through the fog; dead fish pyle up on the shore, trees change color, and terrestrial temperature is on the rise. The Science Patrol investigates the scene of the unaccountable events, the dormant volcano, Mount Ohtake. Minutes after the Patrol arrives, Ohtake erupts and blankets them in poisonous black soot. Hayata knows this to be the sign of the venomous monster, Kemlar. He alerts the cities' defenses but all proves futile against Kemlar's black poison spilling across the land. Hayata and Arashi attack from the spacemobile but Kemlar claws them from the air. Hayata falls. He clutches his Beta Capsule and- FLASH! Instantly ULTRAMAN appears. Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #22

SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and ANNE MOHEIM

Using kalum magnetic light waves, a long-forgotten underground civilization kidnaps Secret Agent Anne Moheim and THE SCIENCE PATROL's Hayata en route to the International Space Army Conference. The villains substitute two doubles to ruin the conference's work. In the meantime, the underground leaders know that Hayata is also ULTRAMAN and, through hypnotic drugs, attempt to "strong arm" him into doing their evil bidding. The dazed Hayata proves to the villains that ULTRAMAN's phenomenal powers belong only to the side of justice! Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #23
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and MONSIEUR ALAN

At the time of the U.S. - Russian space race, an unknown third nation orbited a manned satellite. Its pilot, JAMILAR, never returned. His ship fell prey to the gravitational pull of an unknown planet. Despite the lack of food and water, he survived although his form became hideous and ugly. Maddened, JAMILAR swears revenge against Earth for his condition. In an invisible rocket he menaces the International Conference for World Peace in Paris. Commander Muramatsu of the SIA Science Patrol determines to destroy JAMILAR despite the pleas of Monsieur Alan of the Conference. Torn between duty and compassion, Hayata calls upon ULTRA MAN to halt JAMILAR and...a fierce battle ensues. Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #24
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and DR. YAMAKAWA

The SIA Patrol is summoned to help celebrate the opening of the UNDERWATER EXPLORATION CENTER. Their assignment is to usher the President of the Science Corporation and a lucky guest through the lifegiving pipeline to the ocean floor. Patroller Fuji pilots the S-36, as Jeanie, the lucky winner, and the President take pictures. A sudden shock vibrates through the ship and damages the vital pipeline imprisoning five passengers 200 meters below the sea. Panic strikes! The oxygen supply dwindles. Jeanie passes out! All hope of rescue diminishes as Muramatsu reaches for the last oxygen bomb, when FLASH!... ULTRA MAN appears and lifts the crippled ship from the hungry maw of the sea, Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #25
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and DR. IWAMOTO

The passing of the Inter-Gallactic satelite "Comet 24" generates a disturbance in the underground den of creatures. Word reaches the SIA Science Patrol that three mammoth creatures are closing in on one another in the icy mountain peaks. It is believed that one of the monsters swallowed the six H-bombs once lost in Okhatok Harbor. The Science Patrol issues a national alert and advances to the scene of the battle. In order to distract the monster who ate the bomb from clashing with the others and detonating the bombs. Hayata draws him in single combat. Hayata clutches the precious Beta Capsule. FLASH! ULTRA MAN appears and heads off the monster. In a final surge of energy, ULTRA MAN slashes the creature and removes the portion containing the deadly bombs far into space. Once again, ULTRA MAN restores safety to the panic-stricken world. Created & Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #26
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and KEN HAJIME, NAKATANI TAKESHI, HIROSHI and REIKO

Professor Nakatani employs THE SCIENCE PATROL in the exploration of an uninhabited island of the Far East. They discover the legendary gargantuan monster GEHORA still living and Nakatani begs permission to use his new six-hour tranquilizer to transport the creature to the mainland. Atmospheric changes diminish the drug's effective time and the helpless SCIENCE PATROL drops the raging monster 2000 feet from the air to the bustling metropolis below. Alerted, ULTRAMAN waits to defend the city but the angered GEHORA more than dissipates his ultra-strength. Only the next episode holds the fate of ULTRAMAN! Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #27
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, KEN HAJIME, NAKATANI TAKESHI, HIROSKI and REIKO SAMPEI

Ultraman's ultra-strength can't contain the raging monster Gehora. As Ultraman flies off to regain his strength, Gehora digs deep into the Earth for protection... Little does Hayata know that he has lost his Beta Capsule in the battle. The boy Hajime finds it! In the meantime, police evacuate the city as the Science Patrol wires New York for UNG Sleepers to quiet the monster and Super-activated MAr 133 Miniature Locators to track the underground denizen. A passing soldier spots Gehora and the Science Patrol fires upon its deadly tail. The thrashing tail possesses a life of its own, doubling the danger to the city and the Patrol. Hayata reaches for his Beta Capsule. It's missing! It looks like really big trouble for the SIA as Gehora rages even more fiercely than before. Hajime realizes he must get the Capsule to Hayata. He arrives just as Gehora approaches the temple of the Ancient Ancestors. Hayata disapears: FLASH! Ultraman appears to match his renewed strength with Gehora in a fight to the finish. Created & Produced

by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #28
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and KANOKO

Following a freak bus accident, Captain Muramatsu shadows Kanoko, a mysterious lady in black, to the Space Institute. Unknown to Kanoko and Muramatsu, the weird creature DADA holds the accident victims hostage while DADA 271, a second monster, seeks out two more specimens for a diabolical experiment. Mystery Woman Kanoko comes to collect top-secret information for the Nuclear Institute and see's a hastily scribbled S.O.S. Muramatsu enters just as DADA returns. The creature realizes that Kanoko and Muramatsu are the perfect specimens needed. The intended victims retreat to a window. In panic, Kanoko falls from the ledge, pulling Muramatsu with her. Below, Hayata grasps his Beta Capsule and FLASH! It's ULTRA MAN in a daring rescue! He tackles DADA A and DADA B and destroys them. ULTRA MAN chases DADA C into the sky. A tremendous explosion follows the destruction of the fiendish monster. Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #29
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO and YOMOTO

Instead of solving the mysterious robbery of the world's most productive gold mine, the SCIENCE PATROL runs into terrifying trouble: GOLDON, the gold eating monster. Worse still, Goldon has generated a 14 karat gold reproduction of himself, capable of all his terrors! The dark and dank depths of the fiends' cavern proves injurious to Fuji, Ito and Captain Muramatsu. Hayata sees no one but UTLRAMAN can reckon with Goldon. Clutching his Beta Capsule, he calls forth the Great Benefactor to do battle with Goldon. Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #30
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and AKITA, THE MAN SHOTA, TOSHIO, MACHIMURA, and YUKI THE SNOW GIRL

Wild reports of the reapearance of U, the legendary snow monster, summons the SIA SCIENCE PATROL. While Hayata and Ito interrogate Yuki, the Snow Girl, vacationers uncover the body of a frozen skier. Rumors spread that it is Yuki's fault, since she is friendly with U. An angered mob advances on her. The monstrous white U suddenly appears in answer to Yuki's frightened cries. Hayata realizes that U has hurt no one and he convinces the Science Patrol not to fire upon him. Hayata clutches his Beta Capsule. Instantly ULTRA MAN appears and forces U back to Phantom Mountain and the grateful Yuki follows her protector to the snowcapped peaks. Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #31
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and GOTO, LANDLORD, PROFESSOR NINOMIYA

The SIA Patrol greets Professor Goto's son on his return after twenty years with the SIA of South America. Fuji thinks this strange, since the young Goto is only twenty-eight. She becomes even more suspicious when he asks her for top secret information. She searches his room. Strange reports tell of a giant plant growing in Takara City. Its size increases every minute. Dr. Ninomiya identifies it as a Koronia, the blood-sucking plant monster discovered by the elder Dr. Goto. It is already too late as the Patrol invades young Goto's room. They find Fuji unconscious. Koronia has abandoned his disquise as Goto. He attacks the city along with hundreds of other plant people in search for human blood. The Science Patrol is about to run out of ammunition. Hayata disapears. FLASH! ULTRA MAN appears and advances on Koronia in his latest exploit to protect the world. Created and produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #32
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, with THE BOY HOSHINO, and PATRA of the SIA

Beautiful Patra of Calcutta's SIA joins the Science Patrol for her vacation, with Hayata as her escort. Little does either suspect that their fun ride to the local national park foreshadows disaster. Reports of strange vapors rising above the park alarm the Science Patrol. Suddenly, the giant forest blazes beyond control. Muramatsu radios Hayata and Patra just as Patra sights a fiery, gargantuan creature in the woods. The fiend emits a deafening bark, turns red and ignites all in its path. Patra faints. Hayata carries her to safety and rushes to arrest the creature before it enters Tokyo. Running to a nearby building, Hayata clutches the Beta Capsule. Instantly, ULTRA MAN challenges th looming creature. Flash! ULTRA MAN shoots freezing vapor. Slowly the paralyzed creature evaporates as ULTRA MAN flies to the sky. Patra knows she'll never forget her vacation with the Tokyo SIA. Created & Produced by: Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #33
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, and SATURO

On Aviation Day, Hayata accompanies Fuji and her brothers Saturo to the Air Show. During the jet maneuvers, an echoing voice summons Saturo. Then, the planes and a tanker from the local harbor are sucked into the sky. The same force pulls Hayata, Fuji & Saturo. The all-powerful spaceman scientist Memphiras imprisons them in his non-gravitational satellite. When they refuse to surrender the Earth to him, he turns Fuji into a raving monster who, with monster Baltan and Dada, attacks the city. The SIA track the satellite by radar, find it and attack. Commander Muramatsu saves Fuji and Saturo but times runs out and Hayata must be abandoned. As Mephiras' spacecraft wobbles toward a wooded area, Hayata squeezes his Beta Capsule. FLASH! ULTRA MAN appears! He and Mephiras are too well-matched and the villain retreats to fight another day. Created and produced by: Eiji Tsuburaya

EPISODE #34
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI

Even as Fuji, the distaff member of the SIA admires the falling winter snow, a fantastic red ball of fire hurls earthward to Harumi City. The thundering quake of its landing alerts the Science Patrol to the scene. Within the gigantic crater made by the fireball, Fuji recognizes a monster. He is asleep. As the Patrol maneuvers to wire-lift the creature into space he awakens, destroys a Vtol, then resumes his fiery slumber. In desperation the Patrol inject the creature with helium and send it floating into the sky. Unknown by the SIA, the local air base begins armed practic maneuvers. The monster is shot and plummets toward the earth. Knowing only ULTRA MAN can arrest the monster's crushing fall, Hayata clutches the Beta Capsule. FLASH! ULTRA MAN zooms skyward to save the day. created and produced by EIJI TSUBURAYA

EPISODE #35
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI

On a routine check of the SIA space limits, the Science Patrol uncovers the graveyard of all the monsters cast into space by

ULTRA MAN. On Fuji's suggestion, they hold a memorial service for the creatures. At the same time, a lunar probe fired from the Space Institute strikes a floating creature. Tumbling earthward, he is revived by air friction and heads for a skyscraper, as the nearest place to space. Hayata realizes that the monster wants to return to his eternal gravesite. Knowing the creature trusts ULTRA MAN as his friend, Hayata orders a rocket ship to make that looks like ULTRA MAN. When it is finished, Hayata calls on the real ULTRA MAN, who forces the monstrous beast into the ship and transports him to space. Created by Eiji Tsuburaya.

EPISODE #36
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI

A heinous monster capable of shooting blinding rays attacks the city. Ito hurriedly works to complete his latest weapon, Disintegrator M. The SIA Science Patrol waylays the creature but with each attack its strength increases. Hours before completion of Disintegrator M, orders arrive from Central Intelligence commanding the PAtrol not to fire on the creature. Arashi becomes disgruntled. When the creature attacks the Child Institute, Arashi launches a counterattack. Commander Muramatsu sadly expels him from the Science Patrol for disobedience to the SIA Oath. Driven by the desire to save his people, Arashi takes Ito's invention and propels his rocket into space in pursuit of the monster. Fearing Arashi's destruction, Hayata reaches for his Beta Capsule. FLASH! ULTRA MAN appears and in exciting combat, slays the blinding creature. Ito receives credit for his machine. On Hayata's recommendation, Arashi is reinstated in the SIA as a reward for his bravery. Produced by Eiji T.

EPISODE #37
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI with THE BOY HOSHINO, DR. GONDA

Constant assistance from ULTRA MAN has engendered a false sense of security and uselessness in Ito of the SIA Patrol. The abrupt resurrection of all previously destroye monsters by GERONIMON, the Super Monster, frightens him. Ito forgets to clean the Patrol's weapons. Now, the Patrol must destroy GERONIMON or face the wrath of sixty hate-filled monsters. With the help of Pigmon, the friendly monster, the SIA uncovers the hideout of REDKING and GOMORAH. Hayata makes sure the SIA devastates the reincarnated monsters without calling for ULTRA MAN, before using his Beta Capsule against GERONIMON. The Patrol relies on Ito's new Sparanger Menace Cap. Its success elate Ito. Then, flash! Hayata, as ULTRA MAN, tracks down GERONIMON and in a desperate match of Super Power and Ultra Strength, he demolishes the monster. Created etc. by E. Tsuburaya.

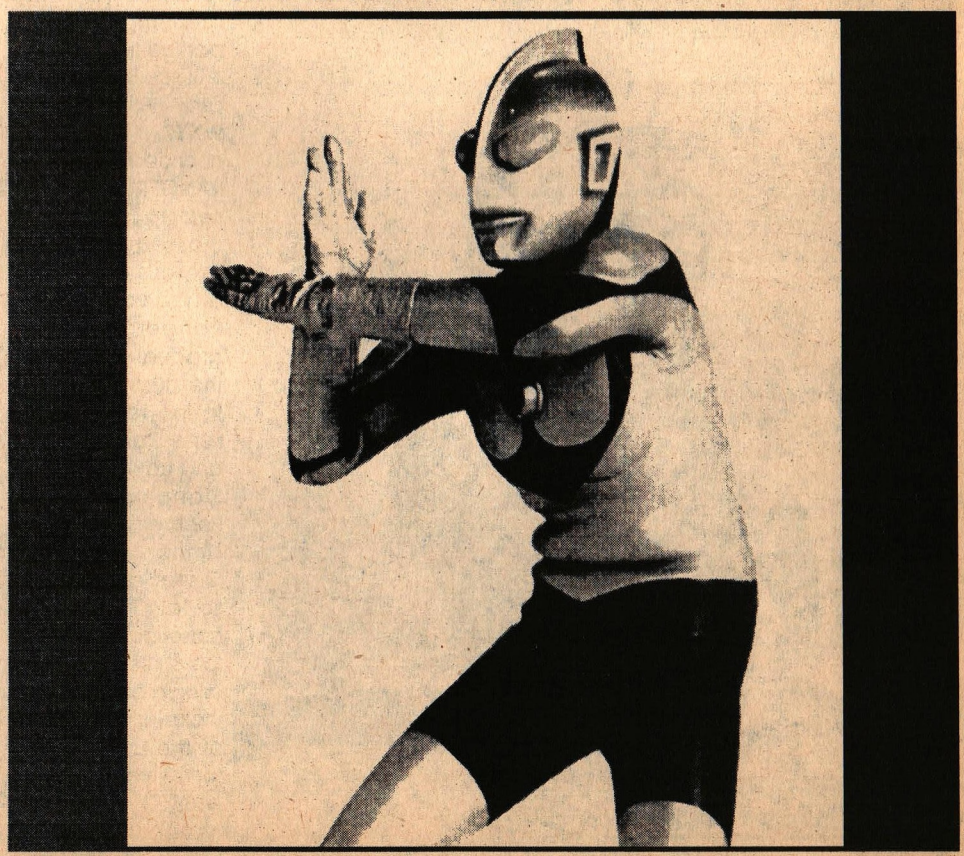
EPISODE #38
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI, ITOKAWA, YOSHINO, ARTHUR

Returning from a scientific exploration of the planet Kordon, the SIA stops to refuel at a space station thirty hours from Earth. A gargantuan creature with white hot eyes attacks the station and destroys the vital 'B' fuse. If the fuse isn't repaired in ten hours, the station will explode. SIA's only hope lies in finding a 'B' fuse left on Kordon by an earlier expedition. Muramatsu leads the search. Arashi and Ito comb the rough terrain. They find the buried fuse. Ninety seconds before blasting off to the space station, Arashi spots the creature with the luminous eyes. Fighting the creature's blinding gaze, the SIA agents flee to a mountain. Forty-five seconds! The monster advances on the ship! Fifteen seconds! Knowing that their lives and the space station are at stake, Hayata reaches for his Beta Capsule. FLASH! ULTRA MAN appears! In hand-to-hand combat, he subdues the monster and Hayata and Muramatsu speed away to the rescue of the endangered space station. Created and Produced by EIJI TSUBURAYA.

EPISODE #39
SIA Science Patol members: HAYATA (who also becomes ULTRA MAN), COMMANDER MURAMATSU, ARASHI, ITO, FUJI

An armada of alien creatures launches a deadly invasion of the planet Earth. Their object: Destroy ULTRA MAN, then conquer the helpless world. While tracking down the mysterious space invaders, the SIA hears a "May Day" signal from Dr. Iwomori at Patrol Headquarters. A creature begins to attack Headquarters as Hayata and Arashi run to the rescue. Clutching his Beta Capsule, Hayata summons ULTRA MAN. The invader attacks him with a strange weapon unknown which renders ULTRA MAN powerless. Only a fellow spaceman from his own planet, M-78, can replenish his energy. Ito and Arashi overcome the creature with the newly-completed Dynacharge. ULTRA MAN's chief appears and takes him to M-78 for a replacement of his broken warning light in preparation for the never-ending vigil against inter-planetary invaders. Created and Produced by Eiji Tsuburaya.

/And thus concludes "Ultra Scan"'s two-part, indepth probe on the amazing phenomenon that is ULTRAMAN! In the next edition of "Heroes on Film", this column "Ultra Scan" will continue exploring the Ultra genre in chronological order, with the next phase: ULTRASEVEN! -DF/



LEGEND AND LEGACY OF THE Lone Ranger

by LINDA ARROYO

"Hi-yo Silver; Away!" and The Lone Ranger theme were my most memorable segments of the television series starring Clayton Moore. In his fitted cowboy attire (hubba hubba!), Moore wasn't the only Lone Rider. Lone Ranger portrayers were heard rather than seen. In the 1930s, before the pictorial screen, there was radio. The radio-series of The Lone Ranger gained a lot of hoopla from kids & adults alike. Even though there was much confusion on who created The Lone Ranger, George W. Trendle, owner of Detroit radio station WXYZ, was first to bring the concept to life.

1933 was the first radio air of THE LONE RANGER. George Seaton "voiced" The Lone Ranger for only four months. His loyal Indian companion Tonto appears later in the series, played by a whiteman, in fact an Irish man (!), named John Todd. The Indian term "Kemo Sabe" means "trusty scout", in case you didn't know. Usage of the term was by James Jewell, director of THE LONE RANGER radio series, who was familiar with a boys camp called "Kamp Kee Mo Sah Bee", established in 1915. After Seaton left, Earle Graser was the voice of The Lone Ranger for eight years. His height and physique didn't compare to the 6-ft., well-built masked rider, but Grasper's deep, vibrant voice gained George Trendle's attention. Graser was the only radio actor who ever gave the effective, "Hi-yo Silver- away!" better than his latter counterparts. In fact, Graser's voice after his death, was used in the closing of the radio and television series of THE LONE RANGER. Ironically founder of the "Lone Ranger Safety Club", Graser was an exponent of safe driving, yet died in 1941 by falling asleep behind the wheel, crashing into a parked truck!

Brace Beemer, studio manager of WXYZ and announcer for THE LONE RANGER, was chosen to voice the masked man after Graser's death. But a new voice for the Ranger had to gradually work into the audience's ear. In the radio series, Lone Ranger fell ill and couldn't speak. Standing 6'2", Beemer's voice was similar to Earle Graser and his personal interests in horseriding, firing pistols & rifles, and handling a bull-whip coincidently fit the part of The Lone Ranger for 13 years. Unlike with Graser, who never had such unterests.

Unbelievably, in 1938, Republic Pictures obtained the rights to The Lone Ranger, and destroyed the former Texas Ranger's origin. THE LONE RANGER (1938), first movie serial of the masked man, starred five (rather than six) Texas Rangers who were all suspected of being the Lone Ranger. Until the final chapter (#15), the Lone Ranger removes his mask identifying himself as Allen King (originally John Reid), played by Lee Powell (THE FIGHTING DEVIL DOGS). The grim-looking Tonto was played by Chief Thundercloud, a true-blood Indian. The sequel, which had nothing to do with the first serial, was THE LONE RANGER RIDES AGAIN (1939). The name of Lone Ranger was changed to Bill Andrews from Allen King. And in the 15 chapter serial, Lone Ranger (Robert Livingston) is unmasked. He is only masked to capture the villains. Originally, Lone Ranger never removed his mask, even when he slept!

Fortunately, when the television series arrived, it kept the origin of The Lone Ranger. Clayton Moore was cast in the TV series THE LONE RANGER, but before his portrayal of The Lone Ranger, played Zorro in Republic Pictures's THE GHOST OF ZORRO (1949). Clayton Moore, named "King of Serials", by Republic Pictures, was chosen over Livingston as The Lone Ranger. Moore was an excellent choice, particularly because of his clear deep voice. As a young lad, Clayton Moore was a trapeze artist and later modeled for some guy named John Roberts Powers. In great physical condition, even 'til old age, Moore was wellknown as a stuntman, horse man, and an expert gun twirler which he often showed on the TV series.

Jay Silverheels, a full-blooded Mohawk from Canada, played Tonto. Unlike films today, very few full-blooded Native Americans portray Native Americans (figure that out!). Silverheels was an outstanding athlete in his youth. A son of a Mohawk chief (and no, not the hair style!), he was a professional Lacrosse player. Lacrosse originated from Native Americans, so it's no

Above: The first Lone Ranger of the screen, Lee Powell, right.
Right: Lone Ranger poster.
Far Right: The second movie Ranger, Robert Livingston, with no mask but with Tonto.

wonder he was an expert at the game. However, today, to my knowledge, Lacrosse players are purely caucasian (?!). Anyway, Silverheels was also a Golden Gloves contender; a boxer who became runner-up to the winner. And here's another mere coincidence, the film THE COWBOY AND THE INDIANS (1949) had both Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels in secondary roles. This was a few months before their leading roles in THE LONE RANGER show. */DF here. I believe Silverheels passed away around 1980, but I'm pretty sure I did see him as a villain, still alive & energetic, in an episode of CHARLIE'S ANGELS. -DF/*

Now after THE LONE RANGER's first TV series between 1949 and 1950, Clayton Moore left because he was turned down for a raise. So John Hart replaced Moore in the second season. As a child, my father would tell me, during reruns of THE LONE RANGER, to never watch the impersonator, John Hart! Though wearing the same Lone Ranger costume as Moore, Hart sucked as the Lone Ranger! I was relieved when Clayton Moore returned, in the third series (1954), being remembered more for portrayals of the Lone Ranger.

The Lone Ranger's origin begins when the Texas Rangers are ambushed and gunned down by their enemy Butch Cavendish and his gang. Later, the six rangers' bodies are examined by an Indian. He notices that they are all dead except one. Healing the Ranger's wounds, the Native American discovers a metal object chained to the injured man's neck. Tonto then recalls a childhood incident when he gave this metal object to a boy who saved his life. Recovering from his wounds, the Ranger, determined to find the cowardly bastard & his gang, fashions a mask from his dead brother's black vest and names himself The Lone Ranger. He then makes six graves totalling all the Texas Rangers, so no one can suspect his identity. With his loyal Indian friend Tonto, Long Ranger captures Cavendish's gang and beats the crap out of Cavendish! Finally, the Long Ranger pledges to continue his duty, bringing all lawbreakers to justice.

Later, Lone Ranger and Tonto, with their riding companions Silver & Scout, discover a wagon wreckage. This was the same wagon Lone Ranger's sister-in-law and nephew rode. Optimistic Lone Ranger, promising his late brother (captain of the Texas Rangers) that he would look after his wife and infant son as well as the silver mine where he acquires his silver bullets. Finally and unexpectedly, Lone Ranger finds a teenage Dan Reid */No, not the one from KAIJU REVIEW. -DF/* governed by an old woman who saved the young infant from savage Indians who had killed his mother. Following the passing decades, Dan Reid's grandson keeps family tradition as the buzzing "Green Hornet"!

A few things must be noted. The radio series of THE GREEN HORNET (voice of Al Hodge) began in 1936, a spinoff to THE LONE RANGER. Universal pictures, in 1940 created the serial version in 13 chapters entitled THE GREEN HORNET (I hope you didn't think it would be another title!). Gordon James played Green Hornet with a bug stamped on his mask. Though Jones didn't have the proper vocal cords of Green Hornet Al Hodge, the Green Hornet on radio, over-dubbed Jones's voice. In the serial, Britt Reid (aka Green Hornet) continues a family tradition capturing lawbreakers with his gas gun, knocking them unconscious. As his predecessor, the Lone Ranger, Green Hornet never killed his enemies. As a millionaire publisher, Reid and his driver/sidekick Kato, played by Keye Luke, battle a criminal gang involved in various unlawful acts as insurance fraud, auto-theft and smuggling arms. Another supporting character was Lenore Case (Anne Nagel), Reid's secretary who doesn't take Britt Reid seriously as a journalist. Ironically, she defends Green Hornet, who some consider a villain, even though she never met the masked-suited man who appears with his calling button (?).

The same year Universal Pictures released THE GREEN HORNET STRIKES AGAIN, a 15 chapter series starring Warren Hull (THE SPIDER'S WEB, MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN, THE SPIDER RETURNS) as the Green Hornet, who battles another criminal gang. Of course you all know that the Green Hornet appeared again in 1966 on the TV starring Van Williams & Bruce Lee. Like his great-grand uncle, Green Hornet's companion is a minority member. "Yeah, so what!" you say? Lone Ranger found companionship with an Indian, during the Western Era when Indians were discriminated against. In Green Hornet's era, during WWII, any slanted-eye, golden skin character was an enemy. This poses a nonconforming, unprejudice view on the heroes. Lone Ranger's and his descendent Green Hornet's inclination towards befriending/partnership with 'enemies' in their eras only intensified public suspicion of their motives or intent. True heroes, they provided the members of other cultures to participate in defending a country that only saw them with contempt! (Note: The Green Hornet saga continues today in the independent comic NOW. Britt Reid's nephew, Paul Reid, takes on the role as The Green Hornet in his modern automobile Black Beauty. And his sidekick is an Oriental babe (editor's definition) called Mishi as Kato. Unfortunately, Mishi remains only for a short time, returning to the male partner). -Linda Arroyo

Gordon Jones in THE GREEN HORNET - 1940.

KAMEN RIDERS OF THE 1980S

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE'S COVERAGE OF 1970S KAMEN RIDERS

KA MEN RIDER SUPER 1

Toei; 1980, Broadcast on TBS, Consisting of 48 episodes lasting from 10/17/80 to 10/3/81, Creators: Shotaro Ishimore & Tohru Hiriyama, Main Writer: Taku Ezure, Main Dir.: Minoru Yamada, Music: Shunsuke Kikuchi, Starring: Shunsuke Takasugi, reviewed by Damon Foster

KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 isn't a bad series, but being from the 1980s, already it was beginning to show signs of '80s corruption. At times, it tries valiantly to generate the same action & thrills seen in the 1970s classics (see last issue), but the fact remains that the 1970s were a separate decade, the Golden Years of Japanese Superheroes; a time when action & fast-paces were more important than special effects and political correctness. As a 1980s program, you can definately get a sense of the martial arts "violence" being toned down to appease the increasing complaints from parental watchdog groups. But to be fair, I've only seen about three or four episodes (the last few), and it was these ones which disapointed me. It's always possible that the earlier episodes still retained some 1970s kick & punch before the censors took over. Here's one show that I'll definately have to do a complete episode guide of (though it will probably take ten years to gather all the episodes!), in order for me to give a more informative, less biased review.

Though the action quality of KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 isn't likely to impress fans of superheroes and karate action, the special effects are a real treat for those who prefer the monster/sci-fi angle. The costumes, pyrotechnics, super-imposed visuals and props are probably the best in a Kamen Rider series to date (that is, until KAMEN RIDER BLACK came along, but more on that later). Though the SFX in the 1970s programs were acceptable in their own time, none would hold up as particularly impressive today. However, those in KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 (itself 15 years old when I typed this) still look pretty cool by today's standards, and are better than most FX currently seen in American sci-fi TV programs. I dare say that Kamen Rider Super 1 is probably the coolest-looking Kamen Rider to date. So no matter how much an old fart like me will whine that the battles in KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 aren't very thrilling, the program nearly makes up for it in production values and budget.

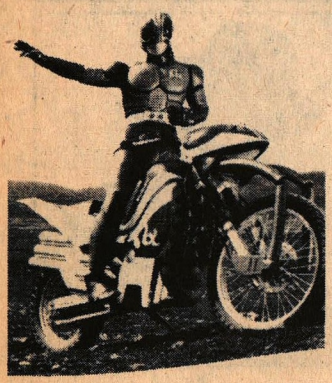
The story is about Kazuya Waki, alias Kamen Rider Super 1. The run of the program has him battling it out with alien monsters like Doguma, Shin Doguma, Golden Ghost and a cool-looking hydra called Satan Snake. What follows are reviews of two sample episodes. **1/2

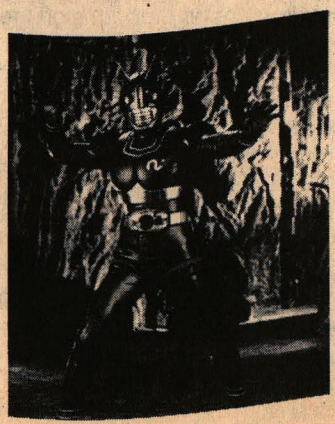
OGON NO A ME! YURE HA KA SE SA IGO NO WA NA !!

{"Golden Rain! The Ghost Professor's Final Trick!!"}

KA MEN RIDER SUPER 1 #47 *[Broadcast Date: 9/26/81]*

Monstrous Golden Ghost (a scientist) uses Golden Rain, which rains down and causes an illness which infects many people, in-





cluding Dr. Kazuya, who originally developed this terrible weapon. Fortunately, our heroes use either an 'Electric Hand', a 'Check Machine', or a special light to rid Japan of this illness and cure everyone infected. Golden Ghost finally suffers defeat, thanks to Super 1's Rider Kick. Dir.: Minoru Yamada. ** -DF

CHIKYU YO SA RA B A ! KA ZUYA UCHU HE NO TA TSU CHI!!
{"Goodbye Earth! Kazuya goes into Outerspace!!"}
KA MEN RIDER SUPER 1 #48 *[Broadcast Date: 10/3/81]*

The lead villain becomes Satan Snake, a hydra who kills human scientists that were forced to invent some rocketship. Though there are three or four decent fights, pitting our hero against henchmen, a butterfly lady and the hydra, they're not as fun as they could have been-- especially for a final episode. It ends with Kamen Rider Super 1 getting on a spaceship called Jupiter #1 to go into space, for some reason. Dir.: Yamada Minoru. **1/2 -DF

The **KA MEN RIDER SUPER 1** movie
[simply called **KA MEN RIDER SUPER 1**, *like the series]*
Produced by Toei; 1981, Filmed in Vista Vision and Eastman Color, Based on Original Characters created by Shotaro Ishimori, Music: Shunsuke Kikuchi, Reviewed by Damon Foster

The special effects of this 1981 theatrical episode are naturally, the greatest in any Kamen Rider production to date. That's to be expected from anything made in the 1980s. One of its best special effects is a flying ship, shaped like a dragon. This excellent miniature is based on the designs of viking vessels.

Regretably, like the KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 television series, this "movie" (or "theatrical episode"; it's only 25 minutes long!) offers another unfortunate glimpse of a 1980s trend that didn't really get under way until

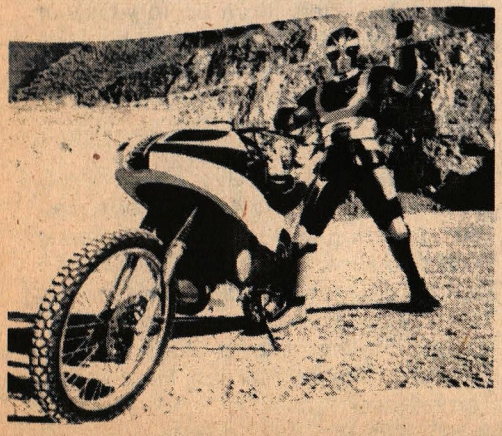
around 1984. This upcoming tendency which would later ruin mid-to-late 1980s programs is poor action choreography, cinematography & photography. In this case, it seems that the costumed stuntmen from Chiba's Japan Action CLub are doing their best, although the artsy-fartsy photography is full of pans & zooms and quick edits which obscure the brilliance of the human body in action. Other fights involve ordinary mortals (fighting among themselves, since we don't see any worthwhile, costumed Kamen Rider action until the latter half of this 25-minute special). Other than the little kids who fight and wear stupid-looking furry vests, the martial artists are pretty good.

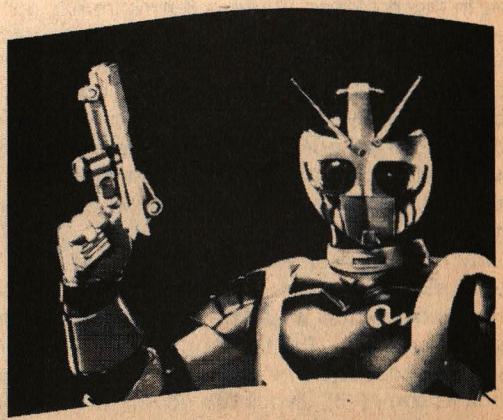
Maki Ueda guest stars as a villain. Her and Jackie Sato were members of a Pink Lady-clone disco band in the 1970s. After the break-up of their duo called The Beauty Pair, Maki starred in the Sentai series BATTLE FEVER J. Other actors in this film include excessive little kids, way too many. There is even an obligatory scene of kiddies bullying each other, something that occurs over & over on Japanese superhero TV.

Other comments before going into the plot: This inferior flick is <u>not</u> in widescreen, the music is the worst in any Kamen Rider movie, and the other riders (1, 2, V3, Riderman, Amazon, X, Sky, & Stronger) only make cameo appearances at the end.

The tale starts off in the mountains, where nearly the whole picture takes place. The monsters of Doguma have disquised themselves as human warriors (hunters, maybe?) who wear vests made of animal fur, and so do the members of a family whom the monsters are up against. The villains break into a log cabin and steal some valuable antique swords. This whole battle takes place at night, and is too dark to view properly. All the clan's adults are killed, so their kids (who also have a habbit of wearing thick pelts of animals) are understandably upset. These boys & girls each have their own little rock, ball, or jewel (whatever they are; they resemble yo-yos) of varying colors (one is green, one is red, one isn't, etc.) which have some power. I suppose these effective weapons were passed down from ancestors. One kid makes his way to a city and gets word out that his parents were killed by Doguma, and Kazuya Waki (aka Super 1) over hears this. He goes to the mountains in search of Doguma and meets his old martial arts sensei, also a mountainman. Later, the kids locate an ancient plaque of a dragon, created by prophets a hell of a long time ago. They fulfill the prophecy by placing their magical yo-yos in the holes on the stone plaque. This creates a powerful, wind-like force which damages Doguma's flying dragonship. Meanwhile, Super 1 is briefly aided by his older brothers (1, 2, V3, Riderman, Stronger, Amazon, X & Sky) when he's surrounded by revived monsters he killed in his TV series. As his predecessers defeat these zombie-monsters, Super 1 goes on to destroy the newer ones, designed for this film. ** -Damon Foster

JYU-GO TA NJYO! [KA MEN RIDER ZX] KA MEN RIDER ZENIN SHUGO!!
Original Writer: Shotaro Ishimori, Planning: Ryo Jirayama & Tadashi Abe, Music: Shunsuke Kikuchi, Film: Himio Matsumura, Lighting: Masayoshi Kumimoto, Art Dir.:





Noboru Miaku, Sound: Katsumi Tada, Editing: Junkichi Kashiwano, Setting: Toei Art Center, Asst. Dir.: Iwashizu Iwazumi, Technique: Yukitaro Ono & Masaru Okada, Art: San Meiku, Produced for TBS Network and Channel 16, Financing: Yanagami Makoto, Production Dir.: Susumu Kohama, Character Design: Rainbow Co., CAST: Toshi Kasada (also translated Toru Sugata? Shun Sugeta?) as Ryo Muraame/Kamen Rider ZX, Eiji Serizawa as Professor Monster, Tomiko Miake as Rumi Ichijo, Toshie Fukushima as Murasami Shizuka, Oya Tamenori Professor Ito, Shinsuke Takasugi as Kazuya Oki/Kamen Rider Super 1, Hiroshi Miyauchi as Shiro Kazami/Kamen Rider V3, Tetsuya Nakayashi as Tiger Roid, Kenji Shiyo as Kuren Taishi, Narrator: Shinji Nakae, Action: Ono Ken Yukai, filmed in 16 mm, broadcast 1/3/83 from 9:00a.m. to 10:00a.m.

Known unoficially as the "Kamen Rider ZX Movie", this is an action packed, absolutely outstanding introduction to the Kamen Rider legacy. Viewing this exciting TV special, often called "Kamen Rider Special" (unofficially) is both a breathtaking experience and a depressing one. The 60-minute featurette is breathtaking because of its costumes, fight-scenes, spine-tingling music and imaginative special effects. It's depressing because this is practically our last glimpse of the 1970s heroes in action. It seems that after this movie, the older Kamen Riders went on a long vacation, not to return until six years had passed.

Seeing old friends like Kamen Riders 1, 2, V3, Riderman, X, Stronger, Amazon, Sky, and Super 1 taking on the baddies one last time is truly an awesome spectacle. These are the same characters I've grown to know & love in those classic TV shows & films from the 1970s, but this version offers a flashy 1980s atmosphere, complete with improved, innovative special effects. But unlike the other 1980s superhero programs, the fights are not boring! How lucky we are this TV special was made in 1983, one year before the Japanese superhero action really started to decline.

Only three Kamen Riders are shown in their human form, since tyring to round up all those old actors would be harder than frozen chocolate. The non-costumed riders who are featured never fight, and are: Shirou Kasami (V3), Jiyouji Yuki (Riderman; played by Akira Yamaguchi for the last time, he died of lung cancer a few years later), and Kazuya Waki (Super 1).

A new Kamen Rider appears in this masterpiece called Kamen Rider Z-Cross. As a bigger budgeted, state-of-the-art hero, his costume is more elaborate than those of his predecessors, thereby demonstrating the evolving transition of these characters. The very first Kamen Rider in 1971 had mere gym clothes as his uniform, and with each proceeding program, each costume is more expensive to make; more flamboyant. In this case, the newest hero (Z-Cross, though spelled "Z-X" in Japanese books) is red & silver, making him look almost like an Ultra Brother.

This TV special was meant to be the pilot episode of Kamen Rider ZX, but no such series ever came into existence. Supposedly, unnofficial word-of-mouth has it that the actor playing Z-Cross was involved with yakuzas, and that possibly Toei cancelled the potential program to keep corruption out of the company!

Riyou Murasame was captured [along with his sister] when their plane was flying over the Amazon Jungle. Their captors are a group of creatures called Badan, lead by Kurayami Daishi, sort of a new & improved reincarnation of Jigoku Daishi (Ambassador Hell). Riyou's sister is later killed while the evil Badan cyborgs brainwash Riyou into being one of their soldiers, and make him become the new Kamen Rider Z-Cross. But a freak accident [in the lab] causes an explosion which allows Riyou (Z-Cross) to overcome Badan's negative influence, and he recalls his sister's death. He escapes, just as the Badan empire creates an enormous, radar-like laser cannon that can destroy buildings & people, via interesting optical FX. Meanwhile, uncostumed Kamen Riders Shirou Kasami (V3), Jyoji Yuki (Riderman), and Kazuya Oki (Super 1) unite and agree that Badan must be stopped. So these three riders are aided by Riders 1, 2, Amazon, Super 1, Sky Rider, X and Stronger, as they attempt to thwart a group of diesel trucks from smuggling explosives to Badan's secret arsenal. As these nine riders battle it out with the monsters & henchmen driving the trucks, Z-Cross arrives and at first mistakes his fellow riders for members of Badan (a logical assumption, most Kamen Riders were invented by evil villains they rebel against), so he attacks Riderman and Super 1, using his "explosive knee caps" which he uses as shurikens! But then V3 interrupts the brief fight and explains that they're all against Badan. One truck slipped passed our heroes and got the explosives to Badan's base. But before all the riders (including the new Z-Cross) go to Badan's base for the final battle, Z-Cross has a personal score to settle with Tiger Roid, a scary robot who deceived him earlier on. After Z-Cross defeats Tiger Roid (the only monster created for this film, the others are older characters), all the riders team up to wipe out Badan's base (near some dam) in what has got to be some of the most exciting footage ever included in any Kamen Rider adventure! *****

KAMEN RIDER BLACK

Produced by Toei for TV Asahi, 51 episodes, lasting from 10/4/88 to 10/2/89, Series Creeator: Shotaro Ishimori, Main Writer: Kenichi Araki, Main Dir.: Takeshi Ogasawara, Music: Eiji Kawamura, Starring Tetsuro Kurata as Kotaro Minami, and Guest Starring Susumu Kurobe (sometimes), Reviewed by Damon Foster

Quite a slick, polished, high-tech, no-non-

sense look accompanies this glossy blockbuster. The costumes for the villainous monsters consistently maintain ghoulishness and add to the production values. These episodic monsters look as good as monsters in major American monster movies, despite their being created on a weekly basis! Our heroic biker's costume isn't half bad either, for what it is. It's a great costume but innapropriate for a Kamen Rider, somewhat out-of-place. For one thing, he's ominous & black (hence the name), rather unlike older, flashy-colored riders. Kamen Rider Black looks more like a Space Sheriff (aka "Uchu Keiji") with antenas than a traditional Kamen Rider. Other spectacular SFX include the elaborate super-impositions and pyrotechnics which bombard each episode.

But as with almost all Japanese heroes of the 1980s, there is nothing else to praise. The stories, plots and scripts are standard, the acting & characterizations are generic, and the quality of the action is merely adequate. Of course, a major highlight from the previous, superior Kamen Rider programs were those spine-tingling duels where our bug-eyed cyborgs fight valliantly despite their being outnumbered about six to one. As a change of pace, this series has no villainous henchmen. Generally, I'm all for new ideas & experimentation, but in this case, it was a dreadful mistake. Without the traditional, vital henchmen, much of the hero's charisma is lost. Seeing oldtimers like V3 wasting an entire task force of henchmen was what made the solo hero seem so heroic, so powerful--so Kamen Rider! And charisma isn't all that's lost when the obligatory henchmen don't exist. The quality of the program's action also dwindles, or rather--it changes. It's a beautiful sight when such complex duels are choreographed properly. But this element is lost, and in its place are the overdone, artificial FX. What's the point of a Kamen Rider program without henchmen battles?! That makes as much sense as a chipped-tooth hooker without a vagina!

On the whole, KAMEN RIDER BLACK is an okay series, but by far my least favorite (not including the even worse American version, Saban's MASKED RIDER, but more on that later) from among the Kamen Rider TV shows. Each episode is stale, repititious and after a while, it all starts to look like every episode is identical. This statement can be applied to nearly every Japanese superhero TV show, but I feel that it is even more prominent in this generic program than in most others.

Plot, Script, Story, Synopsis and what-not: Kotaro Minami (who always yells "Yamero!", which means "stop it!") had a friend called Nobuhiko. But the friendship was shortlived because both these geeks were captured by more monstrous invaders; in this case, they're Golgom, three robed ghosts who look like the mutants from BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES. As usual, this pale white trio turn their captives into Kamen Riders whom they'll force to assist them on their plan of conquest. Kotaro is immediately transformed into Kamen Rider Black, the Dark Knight of the Kamen Riders. But despite his ominous appearance, Kotaro's good-natured personality prevails (again), and the rebelious grasshopper turns against his cruel captors, with the help of his mantis-like motorcycle the Battle Hopper. But as for Nobuhiko, he was kept in a mutating cocoon for so long that when the lengthy process was finally completed at about the middle of the series, the brainwashing was successful. Nobuhiko became Kamen Rider Shadow Moon, a silver, mechanical, powerful villain who nearly defeated our hero. Kotaro and Nobuhiko were the best of friends, but now they're Kamen Rider Black and Kamen Rider Shadow Moon, the worst of enemies. This scenario of "best friends becoming rival riders; one good, one evil" would be repeated in bastardized form in the 1990s, only this time, Shadow Moon would be called "Robo Rider" in Saban's MASKED RIDER. **

RA IDA SHISU!
KA MEN RIDER B LA CK #48 *(sample episode)*

First Shot: Fire ball in space, or rather, a talking oracle?

Not only are villainous monsters (including a flying, cool bat-villain) unleashed in Tokyo, but Kamen Rider Black is nearly killed in a climactic duel with Shadow Moon, and Shadow Moon wins this round (but not to worry, in the next episode, our hero is nursed back to health by a kind whale-monster). Other than the climactic duel between riders, this episode is pretty talky. ** -DF

KA MEN RIDER B LA CK RX
Produced by Toei for TV Asahi, 47 Episodes lasting from 10/23/88 to 9/24/89, Creator: Shotaro Ishimori, Main Writer: Takashi Yamada, Main Dir.: Yoshiaki Kobayashi, Music: Eiji Kawamura, Starring: Tetsuo Kurata, Reviewed by DF again

More of the same, in fact, both this series and the previous one are basically the same thing. Only the name changed as well as having new villains. All the program's production values are the same as those in its prequel. Actually, you know, I kind of consider this series to be a minor improvement over KAMEN RIDER BLACK for two reasons. First of all, aside from the typical main villains and episodic monsters, there actually are henchmen this time. However, they don't do much, and only attack Kamen Rider Black RX occasionally. Second of all, the last five episodes feature long-overdue team-ups, involving the return of the older Kamen Riders. Kamen Riders 1, 2, V3, Riderman, X, Amazon, Stronger, Super 1, Sky Rider and even Z-Cross appear. Unfortunately, actors like Hiroshi Fujioka don't appear, these classic heroes are seen in costumed-form only.

An interesting plot twist is Kamen Rider

(continued on page 38)

SERIAL HEROINES

by Linda Arroyo

[Note: As mainly a fan of Far Eastern productions, names which come to mind, when one considers "heroines" include mainly just Japanese starlets like TV actress Reiko Chiba (pictured at the end of this article to fill up space and because she's quite a sight for horney eyes!), Yukari Oshima, Etsuko Shiomi and Yuki Yajima. But Linda Arroyo presents us with a unique, often neglected genre: A history of early heroines of B&W, American cinema. How about it readers, I leave it up to you; do you want to read more articles of this type? Let us know. -DF]

For starters, I would like to mention the anti-heroines, or human heroines, in silent films. The very first, which began the concept of serials, was WHAT HAPPENED TO MARY? (1912) by the Edison Company. Mary Fuller portrayed the first serial heroine searching for a meaningful existence (BORING!). The Selig Polyscope Company, in 1913, was said to create the first real action approach to serials, with cliffhanging chapter endings called THE ADVENTURES OF KATHLYN (1913). Here Kathlyn Williams plays the heroine facing the dangers of wild animals, and wicked villains who are in pursuit of a title she had inherited in India.

Finally, Pathe Film Company established the genre with the production of THE PERILS OF PAULINE (1914) starring Pearl White, the most famous serial heroine in silent films. White, as Pauline, battles with pirates, gypsies, sailors, cowhands, and renegade Indians. Released in twenty episodes, the serial was poorly directed by Louis Gasnier and Donald MacKenzie. The second serial heroine to Pearl White was Ruth Roland. THE RED CIRCLE (1915) was her debut in a Dr. Jekyll-style, eleven chapter serial.

In 1916's THE IRON CLAW, starring Pearl White as the human heroine, with a hooded crime fighter, the Laughing Mask, who battled the villainous Iron Claw. A true silent live action serial! Of each closing chapter, serial viewers were presented with an equation excitedly bewildering them: "Who is the Laughing Mask?" This was the first live action hero to wear a mask, even pre-dating The Lone Ranger by 22 years.

THE TIGER'S TAIL (1919) had Ruth Roland entangled with both a Hindu tiger cult and a gang of western badmen. With increased popularity, Pathe capitalized upon Ruth Roland by putting her name in the film titles: THE ADVENTURES OF RUTH (1919), and RUTH OF THE ROCKIES (1920). THE ADVENTURES OF RUTH was directed by George Marshall and produced by Ruth Roland herself (and you probably thought women only did it today). Roland was also known for her daredevil aciton. In WHITE EAGLE (1922), she climbed a rope latter, suspended by a plane, while departing from a moving locomotive. And in THE TIMBER QUEEN (1922), Roland rode down a high wire supported by a pulley, and exits another locomotive catching a swinging rope! Action sequences seen decades later in the Indiana Jones mythos.

Linda Sterling as THE TIGER WOMAN (1944).

Left: Mary Fuller. Right: Kathlyn Williams.

Pathe's other interesting stories pertain to the villain as well as the heroines. MARK OF THE FROG, by Edgar Wallace and directed by Arch B. Heath, displayed the villain on the movie promo in a gas mask, cape, and tattoo of a frog on his arm, haunting actress Margaret Morris. QUEEN OF THE NORTHWOOD's movie promo displayed the villain wearing a wolf's mask and stalking actress Ethlyne Clair. These serials were actually considered thrillers which had a leading lady. When sound came into the movie screen, however, women were then pushed aside as co-stars. Instead of being in the fore-front with their male stars, they were knocked unconscious (with a simple push against the wall!) while the guys "duked it out" with the furniture.

Fortunately, Republic Pictures restored

Above: JUNGLE GIRL (1941), starring Frances Gifford. Below: l to r Clayton Moore (unmasked), Kenny Duncan & THE CRIMSON GHOST. Right: Linda Sterling as 'The Whip' with George j. Lewis.

heroic characters for women in serials. Their first was JUNGLE GIRL (1941), directed by William Witney & John English. A 15 chapter story, originally coming from Edgar Rice Burrough's book title (and not much else). Frances Gifford is Nyoka, with her male assistant Tom Neal as the human hero Jack Stanton, they prevent valuable diamonds from being stolen. Becoming the new serial queen, Gifford, with stuntwork assistance, takes to leaping from cliffs into alligator-filled lakes, swinging on vines, battling lions in the jungle, and escaping from quicksand & poison gas-- without messing up her hair!

Due to Gifford being on loan to Republic from another studio, she was unavailable for the sequel PERILS OF NYOKA (1942). Kay Aldridge was casted as Nyoka and dubbed "Serial Queen" with her co-star Clayton Moore, who would become renowned for the character The Lone Ranger in the 1950s TV series. In the 15 chapters of PERILS OF NYOKA, Nyoka had to end Vultura's reign of terror and her fiercely loyal ape, Satan. A specialist in torture devices, Vultura nearly spiked, sliced and blew Nyoka off a side cliff with cyclonic winds in a tunnel (a most intensifying experience for Nyoka, who didn't even break a sweat!).

Searching for hidden treasure, Vultura, played by the hauntingly beautiful Lorna Gray, was accidently speared in the end by her big ape, Satan, while in a catfight with Nyoka (a scene where the two actresses reveal their feminine attributes; something you guys should like!). Aldridge later appeared as a western heroine in the 12-chapter serial DAREDEVILS OF THE WEST (1943). By 1944, she left Republic Pictures (don't ask me why), and, the lovely former model, Linda Stirling wore the crown as "Queen of the Serials", becoming the most popular serial heroine of that time. THE TIGER WOMAN (1944) was her debut, playing a tribe ruler in South America, battling all evil-doers who try to steal the vast oil deposits on her land. Curiously, the title character "The Tiger Woman" actually wore leopard skins.

THE TIGER WOMAN has been re-released in its entire 12 episodes, uncut, and retitled on video as PERILS OF THE DARKEST JUNGLE. The serial was before its time, portraying a heroinne physically fighting the villain! In one scene, Tiger Woman lifts him over her head, twirls him and then drops him on the ground (unlike 1960s heroine Batgirl who seems to only stand and kick! Where do you see Wonder Woman, who has the ability to

Nyoka (Kay Aldridge) pinned by Vultura (Lorna Gray in THE PERILS OF NYOKA.

do this in her 1970s series, pose such feats?!).

THE TIGER WOMAN also includes an execution, which was stimulating, but not quite comforting to the victim who is about to die. The victim is bound over an open volcanic pit beneath Tiger Woman's throne room. A woman, dressed something like a belly dancer (I know, guys- WOW!) performs a ceremonial dance. You could consider it his dying wish! Not that he noticed. The only thing he did notice was the man with a sharp blade cutting the ropes!

Remembered more for her role as Tiger Woman, Linda Stirling also starred in the Western thriller ZORRO'S BLACK WHIP (1944). In the first chapter, her brother is killed, positioning herself, in his place, as "The Whip" (Zorro himself was never in this film, in case you wondered). There's a lot of horse riding and whip cracking in the 12 episodes, but most of the fighting was done by human hero George J. Lewis, a role reversal from common villain as in JUNGLE GIRL and THE TIGER WOMAN.

Though some "leg-revealing", serial heroines fought their enemies instead of distracting them as with later costumed heroines. Unfortunately, Republic Pictures comes full circle returning co-star roles for women. In THE CRIMSON GHOST (1946), Linda Stirling was always knocked out cold rather than joining the combat (as in her earlier film THE TIGER WOMAN) with her human hero played by Charles Quigley against Clayton Moore and Stanley Price, the henchmen of Crimson Ghost.

With some decrease in budget and abate in quality, Republic Pictures' second to final serial starred Phyllis Coates (who also played the first Lois Lane in SUPERMAN's 1950s TV series). Dressing like JUNGLE GIRL to match stock footage, Coates had to fight off large giant claw monsters in PANTHER GIRL OF THE CONGO (1955), a 12-chapter serial produced & directed by Franklin Adreon. Cutting it here, for SERIAL HEROINES. -Linda Arroyo

SENTAI SECTION: BEHIND THE SCENES OF "THE MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS"

by Jeff Pruit

BEHIND THE SCENES OF "The Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers"

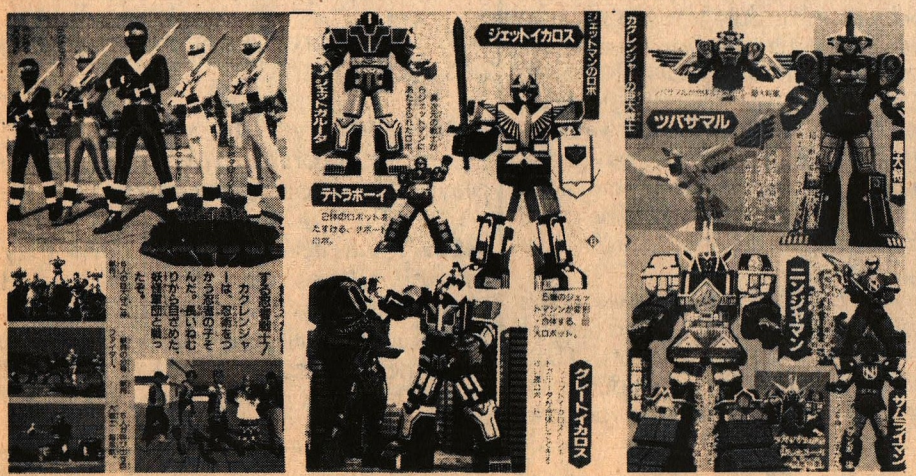
by Jeff Pruit

MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS originally consisted of footage shot in America, of non-union actors, edited together with action footage of helmeted heroes from a Japanese TV show called ZYU RANGER. About the middle of the season, everyone was surprised when the show that was designed to be a cheaply produced Saturday morning children's show became a smash hit and its toy products began to sell out everywhere. Unfortunately, the producers began to quickly run out of the Japanese fight scene footage and had to resort to repeating some of it.

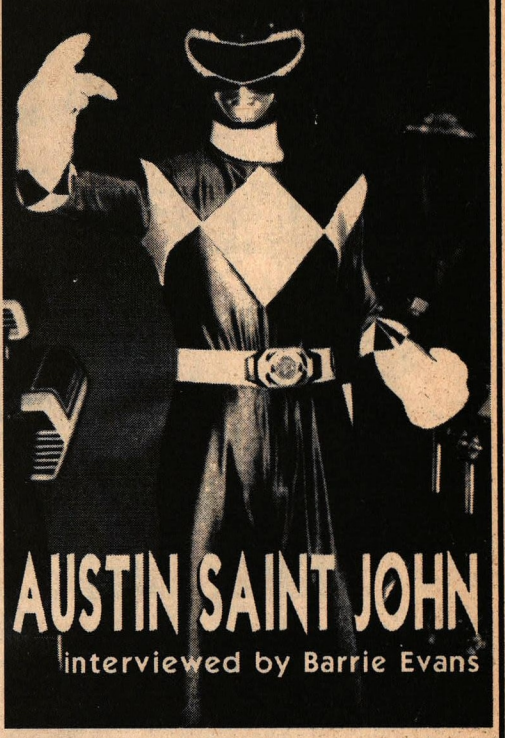
Although the "Sentai" genre had been running successfully for many years in Japan, the Japanese producers changed the costumes and characters each year. This meant that as the ZYU RANGER footage was used up, the show would have to start using costumes from the next season's Sentai series called DAI RANGER, or resort to shooting the action footage themselves. The DAI RANGER footage proved too violent and full of weapons, which was a no-no for the Fox Children's Network, so the decision was made to begin shooting the action in America.

During the first season, the only fights shot here were some of the 'Putty' fights with the actors. They were mostly shot by the second unit director who eventually left to pursue his own career as a director. I had become pretty wellknown in the stunt community for coordination and shooting martial arts action and had completed around 60 feature films & television shows of my own, by this time. I was hired to begin directing, coordinating & editing all of the action for MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS.

The show had never had a professional stunt coordinator before, and the performers in the 'Putty' suits were local martial artists and gymnasts who were great athletes, but had very little in the way of stunt experience. My goal became to integrate more stuntwork into the show and bring more creative action to each episode, despite the limitations of having to mimic the Japanese-style format that the producers



RED RANGER INTERVIEW



AUSTIN SAINT JOHN

interviewed by Barrie Evans

RED RANGER interviewed!

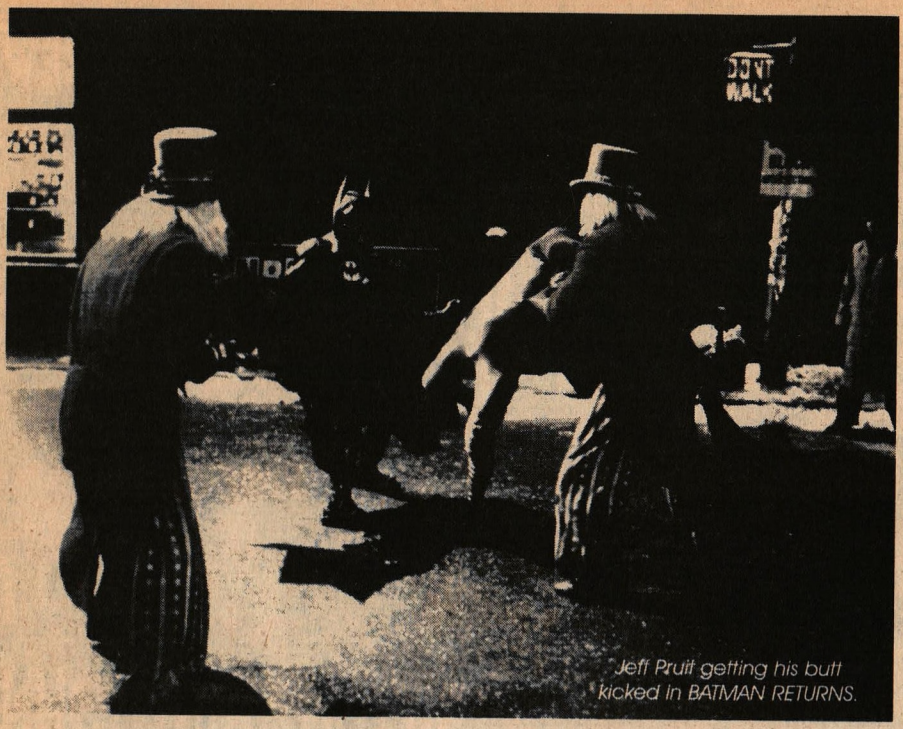
Austin Saint John; interviewed by Barrie Evans

Austin St. John is a name some people might recognize, then again, some may not. He is the actor that played "Jason" the Red Ranger on the first season of Saban's POWER RANGERS. I had the pleasure to interview him by car phone as he was inbetween screen tests. I found him to be a "no bullshit, straight-forward guy", and got the chance to fire some questions at him. I was interested in his views of the show and how it affected his outlook of the industry. It went like this:

HOF: "How did you get started?"

ASJ: "I had been in L.A. for about two months, going to high school and I was trying to find a place to open a martial arts studio. I ran into a man who was in the business, he was an acting coach so I started to take acting lessons. He then heard of a part available of a young guy with martial arts skills, he nagged me for about three weeks to go to this audition. Someone bet me 20 bucks that I wouldn't be wasting my time, I was poor at the time; and that would be gas money for a week, so I went and lost 20 bucks! The rest is history."

HOF: "What happened with you leaving the show? Was it a contract deadline?"



Jeff Pruit getting his butt kicked in BATMAN RETURNS.

wanted.

I am a lover of Hong Kong action films and I am probably the only American stunt coordinator crazy enough to do "Hong Kong-style" stunts in my own films. While I have performed the stunts from some HK films to prove that there is an American who can do it, I have also created my own style over the years that blends the best of Asian and western film and stunt techniques. The problem for me has been to get it all on film and put together properly. I have been luckier than most in this regard, and I have gotten some things accomplished that I can be proud of.

On POWER RANGERS, I saw an opportunity to bring some of this new style to the screen. I came up with new flying wire stunts that had not been done in either Japan or America before. In Japan, the 'Ranger' stunt team did the same basic techniques over and over, and even repeated the same routines from show to show. I wanted each episode to have something new & surprising. I had just finished two years of working on back to back 'cop' features where violent impact was welcomed. On POWER RANGERS, I had to learn what was acceptable and what wasn't. We had to pull back with the camera and avoid any hits to the head. The object became to lessen the impact of the punching and kicking, and increase the outrageous leaps and reactions. It became clear that the less like fighting it was, the fewer memos I would get from the network later.

I brought over a team of Japanese stuntmen to work with the American stunt performers on the show. While the Americans were better at punching & kicking, the Japanese had the stunt expertise and knew how to move and pose in the Japanese style that the producers wanted to maintain. Soon each American performer had a specific Ranger character to perform and knew each character's poses & movements backward and forward.

The early shows had the actors themselves only fighting once a week. Soon I found myself shooting action everyday and editing at night. We shot four episodes every two weeks, back-to-back. Often this meant six actors fighting six 'Putty' characters, followed by six Rangers fighting six Putty characters and a monster. This could sometimes add up to twelve or thirteen fights in a day. This was in addition to the entire acting scenes that my second unit would 'pick-up' from the main unit. I was informed by the editors that my unit eventually came to shoot sixty percent of every show that aired. The "Power Rangers" second unit crew had to be the fastest I have ever seen.

Eventually, I was able to bring the stunt performers from the TV show to Australia with me for filming of MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS- THE MOVIE. Although stunt performers from other countries were not allowed to work in Australia, I was able to bring them in based on the special training I had put them through on the show to be able to perform the characters. It is not as easy as in may look.

Every film project has its own style. This is based on what the producers and director want as well as what kind of film it is. I had been making drawings and storyboards for years, of certain wire stunts that I wanted to

ASJ: "The main reason I left was that it was time to move on, I didn't want to be stereotyped like Christopher Reeves. When you hear his name you think of "Superman". I just wanted to move on, I had had other offers in the movie world. I believe that there is potential elsewhere."

HOF: "So was your contract up?"

ASJ: "No, the contracts weren't up yet, it was just time to go."

HOF: "What did you think of the last episode you were in? You just kinda' left with no fanfare."

ASJ: "Well you know, unfortunately that is the kind of integrity that some people have, Saban is an interesting company to work for."

HOF: "So how did your screen test go? Was it a strange experience?"

ASJ: "I went through five call backs, there were a lot of martial artists, and they looked at all of us. There was a lot of reading and mixing and matching with groups, like which kids looked best together. When it came down to do the final auditions there was a small group, a medium group and a short group. The medium group was my group. They ended up using my group. They tested us for everything, could we dance, could we sing, do gymnastics, etc.

HOF: "I noticed that David Yost in the first season didn't do much fighting, but now he does a bit more."

ASJ: "Well, he isn't a martial artist, and it wasn't required of his character; his character was suppose to be a geek."

HOF: "A geek he is."

ASJ: "He portrays his character well, he's a good actor."

HOF: "What was the general feeling among the actors when Jason Frank, who plays Tommy, joined the cast?"

ASJ: "It was a surprise to us, I think they planned it, I was fine with it either way. I think he is an excellent martial artist, as for his acting skills, I hadn't seen them yet. He earned my respect, and I think it came to a situation where we all got along well

put on film. Some of them had only been attempted in HK, most came from my own creativity. These stunts were far too unreal for the producers of my other films to accept, but on the "Power Rangers Movie" I finally had an excuse and the means to do them. I had over twelve thousand dollars worth of flying gear, custom-made for the film. Some of my designs were sold to the BATMAN FOREVER production as well. In the film, there are some things that have never been seen in a major American feature release.

Of the over one hundred episodes of POWER RANGERS made, I have directed and coodinated around eighty. I am the only person to have directed and coordinated the action in all three seasons that the show has existed as well as the feature film. Director Issac Florentine and martial artist/actor John Barrett did most of the first season with the actors. I am amazed at how often I read articles in other magazines by some martial artist, who may have worked as a Putty a few times on the show, claiming to be a Ranger "double" or choreographer. One day I met with a producer who told me I had just missed the stunt coordinator for MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS! I had never seen or heard of this guy before in my life. This is what comes with success, I am told. If others want to take credit for all of the hard work that I have put into making this show successful, then I must be doing something right.

Currently, I am most excited about my show HAMMER SQUAD! I am working with producer Seth Ersoff and the producers of 'The American Gladiators', Four Point Entertainment, to produce a new action/sci-fi series in which I can have the opportunity to establish the style and quality of the show from the beginning. This show is designed with more plot, substance, and production value than I have ever spent on MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS, I am elated at the chance to create my own series that will have a much wider audience appeal. I know that with HAMMER SQUAD!, I can create something that my martial arts friends can enjoy-- regardless of their age. -Jeff Pruit

SOPHIA CRAWFORD

on the set."

HOF: "Were you originally planned for the movie?"

ASJ: "I was planned for the movie, yes."

HOF: "How well did you get along with the stunt team on the set (Jeff Pruit and Kouichi)?"

ASJ: "We got along really well, I like Jeff, we got along great."

HOF: "What was your reaction to the popularity you suddenly got from the show?"

ASJ: "It was the last thing I ever expected."

HOF: "It must have been just bizarre to go places and be mobbed."

ASJ: "It definately changes your life. Your life becomes an open book to the public, everyone is interested, which is great."

HOF: "How did it feel to know know that it was mostly kids that recognized you from the show, instead of adults recognizing you as an actor?"

ASJ: "You get that, but I really couldn't care less what anybody thinks, I have offers and I'm looking over them very carefully, making sure that I pick the right one. I don't even tell people that I was associated with the show anymore, not in the sense to get an audition."

HOF: "Did you find it a problem?"

ASJ: "Well, it's a problem sometimes, they think that it was a kids' show. Some people think that it's a cartoon and don't know that you can see our faces. Unless they ask me what I've done, I don't mention POWER RANGERS."

HOF: "Sometimes I find that people watch POWER RANGERS the same way that they watch BEVERLYHILLS 90210, they watch it but they don't admit it."

ASJ: "Exactly!"

HOF: "Some people watch it just for the fights. I grew up on Bruce Lee, and can really get into the stuntwork."
-Hellbarrie

SUPERHEROES

BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY

PART 2 by Charles Floyd Rhodes

[The following update is a follow up about Mexican, Italian and Filipino superheroes. Thanks to Charles Floyd Rhodes for the research. -DF/

[ITALY]

I was planning to send in a long list of "Maciste" silents, but somehow I doubt that you'd */He's referring to me, this article was originally a long letter. -DF/* be in the mood to type them up, nor was I in the mood to list all the 1960s Maciste spectacles, but I will mention that about 1971, an Alberto Albertini directed RETURN OF MACISTE, which was probably too late in the cycle. Jesus Franco did do a couple Maciste movies, but based on photographic evidence, he was more interested in female nudity and sleaze than any feats of strength. As if that wasn't bad enough, in 1972, someone in the U.S. did a porn epic, HERCULES RETURNS.

Speaking of Hercules, the Italians also made Hercules movies in the silent era, the few that I know of are HERCULES (1917), THE SON OF HERCULES (1918), HERCULES IN A DILEMMA (1921), and THE TRIUMPH OF HERCULES (1923). The latter two starred greco-roman champion wrestler Giovanni Raicevich, who was also in similar spectacles such as KING OF STRENGTH (1920), THE GIANT AVENGER (1921), THE GIANT'S FIST (1921), THE GENTLE GIANT (1922), THE IMPOSSIBLE VOYAGE (1923) and THE RULER OF THE FOREST (1924). A couple of excellent works in English on Italian epics are With Fire and Sword-- Italian Spectacles on American Screens: 1958-1968 (Scarecrow Press; 1994) by Patrick Luciano, and Muscles, Myths and Movies: An Acquired Taste on Video Guide to the Cinematic Adventures of Hercules by Stephen Flacassier, and to a lesser extent Epic Films (McFarland; 1993) by Smith. There are supposed to be some excellent Italian language books on the subject, but I don't know if they're obatainable.

As for non-muscleman movies of Italy, I can't guarantee that THE LADY, THE SEX AND THE SUPERMAN (1967), SUPER HUMAN (1974), and SUPERMAN: SUPER CASKET (1976) belong in your magazine, but SUPER ANDY: THE BRUTAL BROTHER OF SUPERMAN (1979), directed by Paolo Bianchini, sounds promising. A 1960s Batman copy that I know of is HERE'S DOVELLIK (1967), a recent Italian ripoff is supposedly INVISIBLE BATMAN (1985), but I can only see it listed in John Stanley's book. The Italians also did a number of kinky costumed super-villain movies that probably don't belong in Heroes On Film. One of the Italian 1960s FLASHMAN flicks has the guy wear a Batman costume on occasion, and supposedly, Zorro can turn invisible and there's a Zartan(!?!). A few other Italian superheroes are SUPER FUZZ (1981), that stars Terence Hill, and three superheroes such as (The Phantom) were in one of the stories of the dull comedy WITCHES, which is on bootleg because Clint Eastwood is in it!

I must correct you on SUPERSONIC MAN. It's a Spanish movie directed by a guy (Juan Picquer Simon) more famous for horror flicks such as SLUGS, Jules Verne style epics and E.T.-ripoffs (one of which, E.T.2, was shown on MST3000 as THE POD PEOPLE; gee, is it any wonder that the show was cancelled by Comedy Central? No wonder TCI can buy out Viacom). Oh, the name of Supersonic Man is Kronos, according to Mr. Weldon's Psychotronic book.

[PHILIPPINES]

There are a few TV-type superheroes, the one live action series that I know of is SUPERGRAN, and the less said about it, the

better.

THE PHILIPPINES

I've waited too long for the other-know-it-alls, so I'll tell you what little I have, as I'm a know-it-little on this country's superheroes:

I think Mars Revilo actually did the Darna comics in the 1960s, if not earlier, because some of the Darna flicks date to the 1960s. The few that I know of are FLY DARNA FLY (1968), DARNA AT ANG PLANETMAN (1969) which stars Gina Parena, DARNA VS. GIANTS (1974), DARNA VS. PLANET WOMAN (1978) which does star Vilma Santos, DARNA AT DING (1984), DARNA KUHO ROC? (1985) in which Darna who goes after Filipino horse-demons (I'd have to drag out my folder on the Philippines to get the names of the horse demons. I know that they're nocturnal, that they smoke cigars and are bipedal, that their eyes glow, and that some are known to rape women). I suspect that Darna movies were really cranked out, as I'm aware that most of them had some sort of continuity. Darna also made a cameo in another superhero flick, CAPTAIN BARBELL (1986) and ALYAS BATMAN EN ROBIN *// believe the "cameo" in that film was actually Dawn Zulueta masquerading as Wonder Woman. -DF/* or a similar movie.

Another Mars Revilo comic book turned movie was DIYASA (1957), which has "goddess" against "evil sorceresses". Most of the Filipino superhero flicks are just titles to me, there are also adaptations of local epic heroes. Besides a Lone Ranger spoof, there's JAMES BATMAN (1969), BATMAN FIGHTS DRACULA (1967) which stars Jing Abalos as Batman and Dante Rivera as Dracula, FLY ME TO THE MOON (19??) which has a Superman cameo, BINIBING TSUPER-MAN (1985) which has an alien give a man a magic belt that grants superpowers, SIEGFRIED (1963), ALIAS PHANTOM (1965), THE MAGIC FIVE (1970), EAGLE BOY (1967), MIGHTY ROCK (1970), WILD WILD PUSSY CAT (1970), COBRA CHALLENGES THE JOKER (1967), MR. GIMMICK (1967), MR. IMPOSSIBLE (1968), and a few "Eel" movies.

TURKEY

I suspect that Turkish superheroes are of the muscleman variety, as in THE LION MAN (late 1970s or early 1980s) and TARKAN (1970s), and even Tarzan, as in TARZAN IN ISTANBUL (1952). As they did a number of westerns from late 1960s-early 1970s (yes, you read correctly), I suspect not even Zorro is safe. Some of the costumed superheroes are BLACK EAGLE (1967), KARAOGLAN (1967), KARAOGLAN VS. THE GREEN DRAGON (1967), MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN VS. KILLING (1967), CAPTAIN HURRICANE (1968), FLYING MAN VS. KILLING (1967), and RED MASK (1968).

I'm sure this is only the tip of the iceburg. Now there are some people such as Jeff Rovin and some guy who produced a guidebook on superheroes who think that STAR TREK's Mr. Spock is a superhero. The only Turkish STAR TREK movie that I'm aware of was briefly covered in an issue of Video Watchdog, there are suppose to be others though. I'm a know-it-little on Turkish cinema, somebody else will have to fill the gaps.

INDIA

How broadly can you define superhero? Do you count Hanuman, the original Monkey King? What about other deities and saints? How about super-spies? I've decided to list both costumed and "muscleman" heroes here. This may seem comprehensive, but it's only introductory:

FLYING MAN (1947), FLYING MAN (1965), LADY ROBIN HOOD (1946), LADY ROBINHOOD (1959), SUPERMAN (1964), SUPERMAN (1980) and SUPERMAN (1993). A.B. Gupta did a Superman movie from possibly the early 1980s that was reviewed in Video Watchdog #30, so I suspect Superman was copied more often than I thought, as B. Gupta didn't direct any of the four Supermans that I listed. There was even a G.I. Joe Superman action figure (hmmmm, a G.I. Joe & Superman team-up, is it possible?)! There was also ZORRO (1975), AADHI RAATKE BAAD (1965) about an invisible superhero, DAUGHTER OF SIMBO (1964; a female Tarzan-type), KANGRILLA (1973; a magical lama vs. evil scientists), ZIMBO (1958; this Tarzan imitation had two sequels: ZIMBO COMES TO TOWN and ZIMBO FINDS A SON-- all three of which starred Azad, who also played an Indian version of "Tarzan"!), and ZAMBO THE APE MAN (1937), which was a gorilla that was made into a human by a scientist. This one was so popular that it spawned sequels such as SON OF ZAMBO (1939) and imitations (including Italian ones): VAHA MOHINI (1941; another female Tarzan-type), TYPHOON TARZAN (1937), TARZAN KI BETI (1937), TYPHOON TARZAN (1962), ROCKET TARZAN (1963), the non-gorilla TARZAN AND KING KONG (1963; the King Kong is actually an Indian muscleman from 1962's KING KONG which is actually about a King Kong of a kingdom and his lost son from a forest who defeats him! I believe there were more in this series of so-called "King Kong" movies), TARZAN AND DELILAH (1963), TARZAN AND CLEOPATRA (1964), TARZAN AND THE GORILLA (1964), TARZAN AND THE MAGICIAN (1964), TARZAN COMES TO DELHI (1964), TARZAN'S BELOVED (1964), TARZAN AND THE PIRATES (1964), TARZAN AND CAPTAIN KISHORE (1965; Captain Kishore was in at least two other movies in 1940 and 1957), TARZAN AND CIRCUS (1965), TARZAN AND THE COBRA (1967; India/Pakistan), TARZAN AND THE MERMAID (1964), TARZAN IN PAKISTAN (1968; Pakistan is a land of "fairies"), TARZAN MERA SAATHI

Mexican beauty Norma Suarez, star of SANTO CONTRA EL ESCUADRON DE LA MUERTE.

(1974), TARZAN AND HERCULES (1966), HERCULES (1964), SHEBA AND HERCULES (1967), TARZAN AND JADUGAR (1964), TARZAN KI MEHBOOBA (1966), VANARAJA TARZAN (1938), TARZAN AND COBRA (187), TARZAN (1985), TARZAN 303 (1970), MADAM ZORRO (1962), THE RETURN OF ROBINHOOD (1987), ADVENTURE OF ROBINHOOD AND BANDITS (1965), BADA (1951), THE MYSTERIOUS SAGE (1951).

I've not been able to locate titles of all the other Tarzan ripoffs, I know that Azad and Dara Singh usually played Tarzan in the 1960s movies and that those ERB estate people don't approve. A book on Indian movies at the VW library does have a picture of Tarzan ready to knife a tiger. There are too many Indian filmographies to credit fully, I am indepted to an extensive but incomplete Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema that I own for my double checks & year updates.

[MEXICO]

I've gone light on wrestlers in this letter, as Santo Street, Mexican Film Bulletin, Panicos, bootleg catalogues and other odd fanzines are covering the films. I've chosen to be broader on listings, but I'm not including swashbucklers. Most of the raw data is from Spanish language texts, and as many titles are obscure, I've been selective. Two silent era titles are EL ZARCO (1920) which concerns a cowboy hero and he isn't to be confused with other Mexican movies of the same title and a spoof of Italy's then-popular MACISTE series, MACISTE THE TOURIST (1971), which starred Enrique Ugartenea and, like some of the Italian entrees was set in then-modern times, in this case Mexico. Other movies include:

EL TIGRE ENMACARADO (1950)

THE LONE WOLF (1951)

TELEVISION SYNDICATE (1953)- Rene Cardona Sr. directed this one, it has Tito Guizara as a luchador who battles gangsters in a TV racket.

THE PHENOMENAL WRESTLER (1952)- This Resortes comedy is a spoof of LA BESTIA MAGNIFICA.

EL RAYO JUSTICIERO (1954)- Some confused Spanish language sources led me to believe that this was the masked "Charro" character, he was plyed by Tony Aguila and his sidekick is El Tejon (the Badger, played by Augustin Isunza). In fact, David Wilt's The Mexican Film Bulletin Vol. 2, No. 6 corrects some of my raw data:

El Rayo Justiciero wasn't masked in this or LA BARRANCA DE LA MUERTE (1954), but in EL GAVILON VENGADOR (1954) he does have another identity as the Avenging Hawk! Thus, Mauricia Rosales (Tony Aguilar) is both El Rayo Justiciero and El Gavilon Vengador!

EL JINETO FANTASMA (1946)- Masked Charro or ghost story?

THE FLASH (1946)- An early Zorro imitation.

SUPERMAN (1946)- Directed by Chano Urueta.

EL BRUJA (1954)- This Chano Urueta epic has Lobo Negro and Cacamo, however, they apparently were just parts, no review seems to mention them.

THE TIGERS OF THE RING and **DIABOLICAL KIDNAPPERS** (1957)- The only two of Chano Urueta's four film series that's even close to superheroics.

THE WHITE AVENGER (1954)- Rafeal Baledon directed this entry about a Charro hero.

BLACK EAGLE (1952)- Ramon Peon directed all five of these vehicles, starring Fernando Casanova as a Charro hero. The sequels are BLACK EAGLE AND THE TREASURE OF THE DEAD (1952), BLACK EAGLE AND THE LONE AVENGER (1952), BLACK EAGLE AND THE LAW OF THE STRONG (1956), and BLACK EAGLE VS. THE DEATH MASK (1956).

THE BLACK WHIP (1957)- Vincente Orona directed and Julio Alemon starred in this Zorro immitation, only the mask covers most of his face. The sequels are MYSTERY OF THE BLACK WHIP (1957), directed by Jaime Salvador. The next two were by Vincent Orona, THE BLACK WHIP VS. THE GHOST OF THE HUNG (1957), and BLACK WHIP VS. THE FALSE ONES (1959).

BARU THE JUNGLE MAN (1958)- Vincent Orona directed this Tarzan imitation starring Robert Canedo, the plot involves a man posing as a killer ape. The sequel, BARU'S STANGE WORLD (1958) is from the same director, but this time has Jose Elias-Moreno in the lead role, it's supposed to involve a lost world of dinosaurs!

ZONGA THE DIABOLICAL ANGEL (1956)- Mary Esquivel stars as a female Tarzan.

SAMBO AGAINST THE LEOPARD MAN (196?) and 800 LEAGUES OVER THE AMAZON- More Tarzan immitations.

THE SHADOW, DEFENDER OF YOUTH (1958)- Jaime Salvador directed this actual ripoff of our own THE SHADOW, with guns, a thick eyemask, and a hat. Apparently influenced by REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE of all things, the poster emphasizes the problems of youth gangs, including "rumbles". I haven't seen this one.

THE BLACK ACE (1953)- The title shows promise.

THE X SISTERS (1962)- This title from a Victorio Blanco filmography is an issue of Mexican Film Bulletin caught my eye. Blanco has been involved in Tarzan & Zorro spinoffs and also a number of westerns & horror flicks, so this title may be an obscure masked heroine entry.

CRUZ DIABLO/THE DEVIL'S CROSS (1935)- Cruz Diablo is a masked hero who uses his sword to cut an X on the foreheads of evil doers, in this entry he is a man and his son, the convoluted plot is detailed in The Mexican Film Bulletin Vol. 2 No. 2. David Wilt also listed the sequels, THE SON OF CRUZ DIABLO (1941) and THE SHADOW OF CRUZ DIABLO (1954), the latter two both were about the hero's son.

THE MARK OF THE SKUNK (1950)- I listed this in my Zorro checklist because Zarrillo and Zorro sound a lot alike, and this being a Tin Tan Comedy, I suspected that this was a Zorro spoof. David Wilt states, "this is obviously a reference to THE MARK OF ZORRO", but I'm not clear if he's actually seen this, but Tin Tan's filmography has been full of spoofs on popular movies, such as TIN TAN THE APE MAN (1961), which I long suspected was another Tarzan spoof, which Mr. Wilt confirms.

THE BLACK RIDER (1960)- Zorro imitation.

THE FIVE FALCONS (1960)- These five masked men (Luis Aguilar, Miguel Acers Mejia, Demetrio Gonzalez, Joaquin Cordero, Javier Solis) have a hideout with a hidden trail.

THE SUPER HE-MAN (1960)- "Crazy" Valdes plays a nerd who uses science to turn himself into a super-lover.

THE MASK OF DEATH (1961)- Luis Aguilar plays a masked marvel who was active during the Mexican Revolution, his main concern being women in distress.

There is a subgenre known as "Charro Luchador", that's wrestling/horseman/cowboy/rider/ranch-hand in plain English. Two examples are the two film Scarlet Fox series, some of which are on U.S. dupes as Zorro movies probably, because the Spanish name reads as El Zorro Escarleto, and "La Moneda Rata" (1960), the latter had Joaquin Cordero star as Leonardo Mincada. Also, Rafael Baledon did an interesting-sounding hybrid hero movie, one about a playboy bullfighter played by Gatson Santos in THE POISONED ARROW.

One of Mexico's comic-book heroes is a Yagui chief named Alma Grande (that's Great Spirit in plain English), his companion is El Sueco, which means "The Stupid", whether this is a play on the Lone Ranger & Tonto relationship (yes, Tonto does mean "fool" in Spanish) is anyone's guess. Chano Urueta had directed the initial entry ALMA GRANDE, THE YAQUI JUSTICE FIGHTER (1965), which starred Manual Lopez Ochaa as Alma Grande and David Reynasa as The Stupid.

Ragelio A. Gonzalez did the sequel, ALMA GRANDE IN THE DESERT (1966). A later entry, THE SON OF ALMA GRANDE (1979; Mexico-Belize) had Alma Grande's son team up with Blue Demon. It's suppose to be pretty gory, complete with eye-gouging, the plot concerned an evil cult.

Chiquito Pero Picasa (1967) is aka "El Superflaco", but the serum-de-pendant weakling (Alfonso Pompin Iglesias) actually calls his other identity "Super Macho".

A perhaps unreliable British-published world filmography lists four Kaliman movies, KALIMAN, KALIMAN THE INVINCIBLE MAN, KALIMAN THE INCREDIBLE MAN VS. THE GRAVE ROBBERS, and KALIMAN EN EL SINIESTRO MUNDO DE HUMANON (1974). I suspect that the first two are the same.

THE KING OF GORILLAS (1974)- Rene Cardona Jr. directed this Tarzan ripoff starring Huga Stiglitz, who was also in the same director's VIAJE FANTASTICO EN GLOBO (1974), ROBINSON CRUSOE AND THE TIGER (1972), and SURVIVE! (1976). Curiously, the latter three have all been dubbed for U.S. home video.

THE BAREFOOT EAGLE (1969)- Alfonso Araou directed this movie about a superhero who fights gangsters. It sounds like he uses martial arts.

INVESTIGATOR CAPULINA (1973)- I credit an issue of David Wilt's Mexican Film Bulletin for revealing that this has Superzan, Tinieblas, Frankenstien as a costumed but unmasked hero for a change, Mini-chica (a supergirl type), a female karate expert (Gaynor Kate, who was also in MYSTERY OF THE BERMUDAS with Santo, Blue Demon, and Mil Mascaras). These are cameo appearances, keep in mind, as Capulina is a comedy star.

El Latigo, or The Whip if you prefer in English, is a Zorro imitation who bas been sold to U.S. bootlegs as if he is Zorro. The three that I know of are THE WHIP (1976; Mexico/Guatamala), THE WHIP VS. SATAN (1977; Mexico/Guatemala), and THE WHIP VS. THE MURDERING MUMMIES (1979; Mexico/Guatemala). While I had these three titles in my Zorro checklist for a time, David Wilt's Mexican Film Bulletin is the only printed source that I've seen to give the proper years that they were produced.

THE CHARRA OF MYSTERY (1979)- This was a title that I saw some time ago, that looked like a possibility, and an issue of Mexican Film Bulletin confirmed that it's a masked hero film. According to David Wilt, Jose Martin had a career as a masked ranchera singer until he played Don Marcas (aka El Charro del Misteria). Jose Munguia is the director.

GOODBYE GOODBYE MY IDOL (1982)- This is suppose to be a musical fantasy about Santo and his niece Batgirl.

THE BIONIC HE-MAN (1981)- Andres Garcia plays Dracula. I don't know if this Dracula is a vampire or not, and I don't know who plays the hero cyborg. Fans of sexy Mexican women will note that Isela Vega is in this one.

One Mexican TV superhero from the 1970s is El Chapulin Colorado, the superhero wears a red costume with a hood, he wears yellow shorts on the outside, his weapon is a mallet with a yellow handle with a red head. This is a comedy, so he'll run into trees and fail to get laid, and a lunch-box depicted him battling octopi and bankrobbers. In some episodes, fairy tales such as "Snow White and the 7 Dwarves" are adapted.

METICHO Y ENCAJOS- was a Mexican movie with costumed heroes Chile and Mole in a supercar called Chilaqua. Their foe is Chico Damar.

ROBO WARRIORS- I probably came across this and the above movie in a video catalogue. The idea that Mexicans have discovered Japanese-type robot/cyborg heroes intrigues me. Or is this a misleading retitling?

REVIEWS

LA SOMBRA VENGADORA

1954, Producer: Luis Manrique, Director: Rafael Baledon. Starring: Aromondo Silvestre, Alicia Caro, Rodolfo Landa, Carlos Martinez Baena, Saba Guash, Rafael Banquels, Carlos Muzquiz, Reviewed by Paul Schiola

I really enjoyed this particular masked superhero movie, mainly due to its likeness to the old "Republic" serials-- no messing around, just on with the action and weirdness. Although, there was no straight ring-wrestling action, there were enough fight scenes to make up for it. Usually, these fight scenes had "La Sombra" (The Shadow) scraping with five or six henchmen who throw everything in the book at him.

What's neat is that not only do we have a mystery hero, we also have a mystery bad guy which pushes the whole mystery where you usually find one or the other, not both. "Mano Negro" dresses most mysteriously, and not unlike Lamont Cranston as "the Shadow" with a black long cut suit, large brim black hat and gloves, and to top it all off, he also wears an all-black wrestling mask hiding his identity.

As mentioned earlier, this flick is jam-packed with great serial confrontations, like La Sombra jumping onto a moving car and kicking butt on the four guys inside, or while being cornered by henchmen, La Sombra hides in a hay-stack, which is set a blaze and then riddled with bullets; luckily, La Sombra finds a hidden trap-door under the hay stack and hides until the danger is over. "La Sombra's" particular nemesis this outing is "Mano Negro" (Black Hand). "Mano Negro" is the head of a secret crime organization, trying to obtain the services of scientists and/or technical workers through extortion that ends in sure death by what we are lead to believe is a mysterious cat-like creature, that its victims only see its glowing eyes before their own eyes are scratched out and they are killed. The victims' bodies are than "stamped" with the symbol of the black hand and are left by the roadside for the horrified locals to discover. As you can imagine, this activity attracts the attention of our hero "La Sombra" who then starts on the trail to end this reign of terror.

In the end, Mano Negro does get his identity exposed by our hero, while La Sombra is only shown in shadow removing his costume and hanging it in closet reassuring us he will return to serve justice when needed. ***1/2 -Paul Schiola

BATANG-X

A Regal Films Presentation, 1995; A Gallagar/ Reyes Film, Music: Archie Castillo, Editor: Danny Gloria, Dir. of Photography: Joe Tuantes, Production Designer: Jay Herrera & Adrian Torres, Line Producers: Madeleine Gallage & June T. Rufino, Story & Screenplay: Peque Gallaga & Lore Reyes, Supervising Producer: Roselle Monteverde Teo, Exec. Prod.: Lily Monteverde, Starring: Aiko Melendez, Janus Del Prado, John Prat, Anna Larrucea, J.C. Ace Zabarte, Michael De Mesa, Teresa Loyzaga, Amy Perez, Orestes Ojeda, Reviewed by Damon Foster

I don't get it. I just don't get it (and no, I'm not talking about sex again) at all. This Filipino sci-fi farce had me completely stumped; it's rare that any untranslated movie, regardless of language, can keep me in the dark throughout its running time. After all these years of becoming familiar with every possible variation of any story, every cliche, and every repeated formula, I had assumed I could get the basics of any non-English plot. But BATANG-X is just so bizarre, weird, and way-out-there, that I was completely confused, and if I tried figuring this mess out, my brain would hurt.

As for entertainment value, portions of it are okay, but on the whole, I wasn't especially impressed. Our heroic kiddies wear some truly stupid-looking superhero attire, it looks like odds & ends left over after Halloween; colorful costume accessories found in the discount aisles of Toys R Us and K Mart-- production values which are quite common in childish Filipino fantasies. But this is no BIOKIDS, the script of our young heroes is uneven and completely unconventional; for better or worse. These tiny tots don't even seem to get their space-age, Sid & Marty Kroft-reject costumes until the middle of the movie, and what goes on before is completely bizarre, even demented, almost sick at times. Much of the first half hour has this team of kids being kidnapped, experimented on, given cruel therapy, and other disturbing procedures which could easily qualify as high-tech torture! Several times they're knocked out by stun-guns, and in other scenes, poison-tipped arrows are fired into their throats to knock them out.

The boys exhibit "goofy" (Jerry Lewis-ish) facial expressions just as the penetrating arrow's venom takes effect, to try (unsuccessfully) and remind us it's meant to be funny. These morbid scenes (which include

some gross footage which looks like an authentic operation, with some flesh being cut open) take up almost the first half of this oddity, the remainder almost becomes your typically infantile kiddy flick, with our bionic twerps battling aliens or robots. Like I said, this movie is strange & unconventional, and breaks all the rules of superhero excitement. This in itself is not all bad, since the movie had me in a constant state of wonder; I could never tell what was going to happen from scene-to-scene! So, if nothing else, one fact remains: BATANG-X is unpredictable!

The special effects are okay for a typically low budget Filipino romp. Though the mighty kiddy/cyborgs have ridiculously artificial, colorful costumes, there's a villain called Zygrax who's kinda' neat. At first he resembles a robot, not at all unlike those on Japanese TV. Later, his helmet comes off, revealing a really cool make-up appliance that covers the whole head, resembling the Predator in Swartzenegger's PREDATOR. The visuals include super-imposed rays & laser beams that the children fire from their rayguns. These effects are okay, but since the only real action (aside from an incredibly lame fist fight with stereotypical 'punks') are these endless raygun duels, it really gets tedious & repetitious. Making the laser battles all the more irritating is that the results of these beams aren't just logical deaths, but it seems they also cause the targeted victims to act like dogs, horses, cats, ballerinas, and any other ridiculous characterizations these drug-addicted writers could come up with. These are obviously attempts at humor, and I emphasize the word "attempts", not "humor". The other decent effects are the obligatory computer morphing scenes, but everyone is doing those now, and I have yet to see a computer effect (yes, including those in TERMINATOR 2: JUDGEMENT DAY) that didn't look like computer FX.

So in the final analysis, is BATANG-X a hit or a miss? It's really hard to say, because it's so damn abnormal it really can't be compared to anything else. I suppose if they were trying to combine ROBOCOP, H.R. PUFF N' STUFF and A CLOCKWORK ORANGE, they succeeded, and it's a hit. However, I don't think that's what they had in mind-- so I guess that makes it a miss. I can base my rating (just one star; *) on entertainment value alone, but then, I'm sure as hell not part of its target audience! Exactly who is, I'll never know. Psychotic Filipino children, maybe?

It seems as though these two bumbling guys (there are infantile, cartoonie sound FX when they hit each other) are out to kidnap kids who may or may not be descended from bald aliens resembling those in ALIEN NATION. The two goofy kidnappers don't seem real threatening until they actually inject & drug four or five different kiddies before abducting them to some high-tech laboratory. Their beautiful leader (played by Aiko Melendez), who's hair style always seems to be changing, plans on changing our disturbed young victims into a squad of androids. Meanwhile, yet another eccentric scientist is working on some magical experiments of his own. At this point, it becomes impossible to tell who's good, who's bad, who's against who, and who's side anybody is on. Even our young heroes fight amongst themselves once or twice, and later Aiko Melendez's wig comes off and reveals that she too is an alien, or mutant, whatever. It also seems that one of the kiddies is her son, since he too has one of those funny, bald, Klingon-ish heads. I don't know, I just don't get this story at all-- as you can tell! The only use for this movie is to play it at a party with the sound turned off, and be sure nobody is thinking too hard (for best results they should be drunk or on acid). It suddenly makes Chronenberg's NAKED LUNCH seem logical & coherent. * -Damon Foster

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

1984-1986 - First Series Directors: Ian Sharp & Paul Knight, Story: Richard Carpenter (Creator of the Series), Second & 3rd Series: various Directors, Producers: Paul Knight (2nd Series) and Esta Charkham (3rd Series), Cast: Michael Praed (1st & 2nd series), Jason Connery (third series), Judi Trott, Clive Mantle, Ray Winstone, Phil Rose, Peter Llewellyn-Williams, Mark Ryan, John Abineri, Jeremy Bullock, Nickolas Grace, Robert Addie, Phillip Jackson, Anthony Valentine, Philip Davis, Rula Lenska, Richard O'Brien; Reviewed by Linda Arroyo

I don't like any production of Robin Hook other than Richard Carpenter's. He did a wonderful job in developing a more convincing folk hero. Instead of silly costumes and phony sets as with Errol Flynn's version of Robin Hood in 1938 (THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD), ROBIN OF SHERWOOD's costume design is realistic as well as the setting, which is done outdoors, and in a real castle! And unlike the fraud Kevin Costner as ROBIN HOOD, PRINCE OF THIEVES (1991) in America, ROBIN OF SHERWOOD (ROBIN HOOD was the original title) is a British production, the way it should be!

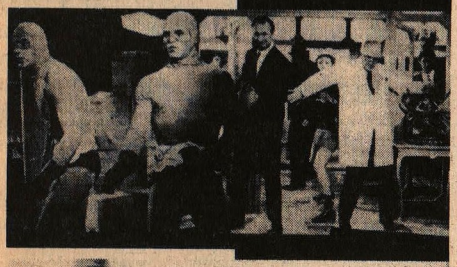
Still consisting of the legendary characters Little John (Clive Mantle), Scarlet (Ray Winstone), Friar Tuck (Phil Rose), and Much (Peter Llewellyn-Williams), Carpenter also includes Maid Marion (Judi Trot) in the team and a Saracen named Nasir (Mark Ryan), who fights with two swords (this character was copied in ROBIN HOOD, PRINCE OF THIEVES)! Added to the saga is a true legendary character, Herne the Hunter (God of the forest, to the people of Wickham),

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

who Robin consults.

Michael Praed, the long-haired & hairy chested beauty, is Robin Hood for the first & second series. He carries one of the Magical Swords of Wayland called Albion and wins back the sacred "silver arrow" of Herne, which was taken after his father's death, in the first series. Leaving to perform in a Broadway Musical version of The Three Musketeers (eek!), Carpenter saw to it that Praed/Robin Hood's mild, outspoken character is arrowed down (pierced!) by his enemy, the sheriff of Nottingham (Nicholas Grace). But it doesn't end there. Jason Connery (Sean Connery's son), a golden haired, hairy chested beauty, is chosen by Herne the Hunter in continuing to help the poor from greedy fiends like the Sheriff of Nottingham. Unlike this predecessor, Robert of Nottingdon (Jason C.) is an Earl's son, while Robin of Loxley (Michael P.) is a peasant. Robert of Muntingdon could not fully comprehend the hardships of the villagers, but he succeeds as Herne's son for the last series.

Carpenter's story of Robin Hood begins when Robin is arrested with his half-wit stepbrother Much, by Sir Guy of Gisburne (Robert Addie). Escaping with other bandits, Robin Hood is chosen by Herne as protector of the common people. With the combination of myth, legend, and mysticism, ROBIN OF SHERWOOD is an excellent live action adventure! He battles magicians Baron Simon de Belleme (Anthony Valentine) and Gulnar (Richard O'brien, well known for creating THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW), witches Jennet (angharad Rees) and Lilith (Gemma Craven), The Knights Templar, a clan of Lucifer worshippers charged by Rula Lenska as the deadly Morgwyn, and a cult called the "Sons of Fenris" where Gulnar is leader! Inbetween, Robin Hood cunningly escapes from the Sheriff's & Gisburne's plans of capturing him. ***** -Linda Arroyo



THE THREE FANTASTIC SUPERMEN

1967, An Italian/French/German/Yugoslavian Production, Written by Kramer & Marcell Coscia, Dir.: Frank Kramer, Starring: Brad Harris, Tony Kendal (aka Luciana Stella), Nick Jordan, Joseen Brockman, Sabine Suu & Bettina Busch, Reviewed by John Grace

Aside from a brief U.S. theatrical release in 1979, this terrific comedy caper and its sequels have never received any of the attention or exposure they deserve. That's too bad, because this movie is one of the best superhero films ever made. The English dubbing is well-done and often witty, the villains are dastardly, the German locations are used well and the action scenes are terrific combos of acrobatics, karate, machine-guns, car chases, and bizarre visual gags. Add a lively music score of lounge/mambo music, and you've got an enjoyable classic.

Director Kramer went on to make the KOMMISAR X movies with Brad Harris & Tony Kendal. These are entertaining spy films with gadgets & action. He also made the SABATA spaghetti westerns, which featured the acrobatic talents of Jordan & Borgese. Sadly, none of his films are available on U.S. video. There have been at least five sequels to THE THREE FANTASTIC SUPERMEN, and several ripoffs, like the THREE SUPERGUYS series (which are Italian/Turkish productions). If anybody has more information on these films, please write us!

Frank Kramer gives the film a lighthearted tone and never lets anything get too serious. The acrobatic stuntwork is mind-boggling! One amazing scene has Jordan (actually Sal Borgese, his double) jump off a building, bounce off a trampoline and land in the backseat of a convertible, all in one take! I wonder if Jackie Chan saw this Italian movie when he was a kid!!

Our heroes are a musclebound FBI agent (Brad Harris, an American bodybuilder who starred in many Italian musclemen flicks of the 1960s), a cocky thief (Italian actor Tony Kendal), and a silly, mute thief (Nick Jordan, who over acts a bit). They wear red & black, bulletproof superhero costumes equipped with special boots that enable them to walk on walls and jump 20 feet high. Their only weapons are bolo/yo-yos that disarm gunmen and hit them on the heads like billyclubs. Their mission is to stop a diabolical criminal (Brockman), who has stolen the Universal Duplicator, a machine that can clone anything. The climax has our heroes fighting clones of Harris's character. ****1/2 -John Grace

MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS: THE MOVIE

20th Century Fox; 1995, Dir.: Bryan Spicer, Screenplay: Arne Olsen, Story: John Kemps & Arne Olsen, Producers: Haim Saban, Shuki Levi & Suzanne Todd, A Saban Entertainment/ Toei Co. Production, A Bryan Spicer Film, Dir. of Photography: Paul Murphy, Cast: Amy Jo Johnson, David Yost, Karan Ashley, Johnny Yong Bosch, Steve Cardenas, Jason David Frank, Jason Narvy, Paul Schrier, Paul Freeman, Reviewed by Damon Foster

By the time this theatrical movie came out, the Power Rangers were much more of an American and/or international phenomenon than they were just the here-today-gone-tomorrow, hasbeen heroes of older, outdated Japanese TV. No longer do we look at them and say, "It's Toei's Zyu Rangers spliced & dubbed in English". Being able to finally forget the original Japanese roots, this movie entertained me in its own right (or maybe in its own left, or in its own wrong). I think this movie was one of the last times we saw Saban's heroes choreographed by American martial artists (obviously influenced by HK stuff, fortunately!). As such, its three duels are quite good, without the excessive theatrics and robot-like poses of the Japanese predecessors (but nowadays, Saban has hired Japanese guys to bring the artificial gestures back into the series). So luckily, the endless sword swinging & explosions which plague Japanese Sentai are replaced in this U.S.-made successor by actual kicks, punches and gymnastics galore.

This isn't to say that MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS: THE MOVIE is devoid of special effects, there are plenty of costumes and computer-generated FX, about half of which (i.e. monsters which melt & splat when smacked hard enough) are convincing. Like the TV show that inspired it, it's all quite flashy and colorful. Other production values include a sexy, Barbarella-inspired space girl played by Mariska Hargitay (the late Jane Mansfield's daughter). So on the whole, this film is a

decent little action fantasy meant for kiddies, but adults, when drunk enough, could get a kick out of it too. I mean, it's more fun than most other American martial arts farces; the three battles are more exciting than anything I've seen in a Claude Van Damme or Steven Segal movie-- which isn't saying much. I was also relieved that only minimal time was given to those stupid fools Bulk & Skull, their humor (if you can call it that) is nowhere near as time-consuming in the film, as it is in the series. Unfortunately, irritating robot Alpha (the 7-Zark-7 of the 1990s) is ever present, constantly saying, "I-I-I" (or "aye-aye-aye", whatever) in that incredibly annoying high-pitched voice of its! My god, I absolutely hate this lame robot with a passion, and whoever supplies its voice oughta' be taken out and shot.

The main difference between the program and the feature-length continuation is, of course, the increased production values, an area where 20th Century Fox obviously blows away them Saban tightwads! Of course, it helps to shoot the whole flick in Australia (for budgetary reasons, I guess), and only an eagle eye could tell the difference. A few minor, unimportant characters (of which this flick is full of) have Australian accents though, and that's a dead give-away. But it was worth it; otherwise, the costumes, FX, sets, and stunts are far superior to the TV footage shot in L.A. and Japan.

The script of this average adventure has our six heroes doing a little sky diving to the tunes of Red Hot Chilly Peppers (the biggest bunch of annoying, sell-out/posers in "alternative" rock history), before we meet our demonic, wizard-like villain, the wise-cracking Ivan Ooze. Ooze? Wasn't there a Ninja Turtle fiasco called TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2: SECRET OF THE OOZE?! Have them dumb reptiles sued these "Mighty Morphin' Power Ripoffs" yet? Anyway, the film's pacing is decent until the rangers abruptly teleport to some alien planet, for a tedious jungle adventure which looks like what would happen if Indiana Jones wore hand-me-downs from Japan's KAKU RANGER (Toei; 1993). For a while, they dress as ninjas (or "ninjetti", as some jungle chick calls them), but the climax, having returned to Angel Grove (looking more like Sidney than L.A.-- gee, I wonder why), is just a mess of giant robots & scorpions; nothing wrong with that, except it's so obviously computer generated. Gimmie rubber suits any day! ** -Damon Foster

MASKED RIDER

Production Company: Saban Entertainment, Released & Syndicated: Fox TV, Original Footage: Toei Co. Ltd. (Japan), Co-Producer: Ann Knapp, Supervising Producers: Michael Montgomery, Tony Oliver, Scott Page, Produced by Robert Hughes, Written by Shuki Levi, Shell Danielson, Dir.: Shuki Levy, Starring: T.J. Roberts as Dex/Masked Rider, Rheannon J Slover as Molly, Ashton McArn II as Albee, David Stenstrom as Hal Candace, Camile Bender as Barbara, Ken Ring as Count Dregon, Jennifer Tung as Nefaria, and Introducing Ferbus, Reviewed by Lenell Bridges

The series made its debut Fall of 1995, on Fox TV's Saturday morning time-slot. MASKED RIDER utilizes footage from Toei company's famed KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX, a long running TV series, and splices new footage of American actors into the fight scenes (just like MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS and V.R. TROOPERS). It seems Saban hasn't learned anything yet. Alas, I can't give MASKED RIDER a good review. In fact, it's the most uninspiring series I've ever seen! It's a bastardization of a Japanese work, at its worst! Let's face it, Saban, like other U.S. companies can't do it; try as hard as they might, they just can't duplicate Japanese work and this series says it all. MASKED RIDER is the shame to the popular Kamen Rider series. The Japanese series is thousands of times better! MASKED RIDER combines a serious Japanese series with comedy, rather like the comedy of ROSEANNE */Correction, there was an episode of ROSEANNE, about two years ago, which offered something which was almost remotely funny, to a certain extent. -DF/*. A deadly combination, which comes out into a confusing mess which could make long time fans of the Japanese genre violently ill!

The series tells of the adventures of a young prince from the planet Edenoi named Dex (TJ Roberts) who, by his grandfather (king of the planet) is given powers to go to the planet Earth to defend it against the evil of Count Dregon and his army of evil Insectzoids, who want to conquer it. Dex is adopted by a kind family and is taught to live like an Earthling. When Count Dregon and his army strikes, Dex uses his powers to become Masked Rider, to battle Dregon and the insectzoids he sends. The stories depict Dex's battles. Despite the added (the less violent ones) Japanese scenes, it doesn't help this show! Not one bit. In fact, it's not even a good laugh either! The acting is terrible by both the heroes and villains in the series. The acting in the SMALL WONDER TV series is better, and that's really scary. The stories are pathetic, and even the new villains they added to replace Japanese ones aren't impressive. Plus even their design of the Masked Rider costume looks cheap (the Japanese version is 100% better). Lastly, they severely cut down on the action content which is in most Kamen Rider series. Saban is bowing down to pressure from parents to cut down in the violence in their programming. The fighting scenes and the SPFX are badly edited. Plus, I cant' take that 'funny' furball Ferbus creature (he reminds me of the Ewoks in STAR WARS, he makes a jackass of himself just like the actors do).

In short, MASKED RIDER is a good laugh of a show geared for the kiddies, as usual. Like I mentioned recently, I have not seen (as of yet) one example where an Americanized show is better than its Japanese counterpart. Why Toei Co. is selling out to Saban is beyond me. Why is Toei letting Saban turn their popular shows into monstrous bastardizations?! I wonder what Japanese fans would think if they saw this show-- don't even ask! There's a saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Saban wanted to fix KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX for the U.S. viewers, but instead they turned it into something worse. It would have been easier to just dub it and release the original Japanese series as it was originally. It would have meant time and money saving, but alas, Saban is only after the money these shows can bring from the TV ratings (and from merchandising-- what else is new?)!

While the Kamen Riders (in Japan) have risen to the heights with Godzilla, Ultraman, and Gamera in the aspects of good stories, action, SPFX and of course popularity, MASKED RIDER sinks down to the awfulness and silliness you would find in BARNEY THE DINOSAUR. In fact, I hate to admit it, but DYNAMAN (of Night Flight) and ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE HERO were better than MASKED RIDER! The superior Japanese Kamen Rider programs are all available on Japanese video. Watch KAMEN RIDER or KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX and compare it to MASKED RIDER, and you'll notice the difference. I'm sure you'll pick a Japanese-language original as the better of the two. When will Saban ever see the light? Probably never! MASKED RIDER really stinks!!! I would rather watch a 12-hour non-stop marathon of SEA HUNT, GILLIGAN'S ISLAND, EMERGENCY, or LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, than to sit through 30 minutes of this trash. */Oh yeah? Well I can top that. Instead of watching MASKED RIDER, I'd rather drink water from a hot tub in a gay bath-house. -DF/* Rating: No star, zero! -Lenell Bridges

SHEENA

1984; Producer: Paul Aratow, Dir.: John Guillermin, Exec. Prod.: Yoram Ben-Ami, Story: Lorenzo Semple Jr., Cast: Tanya Roberts, Ted Wass, Donovan Scott, Trevor Thomas, France Zobda, Princess Elizabeth of Tora, Reviewed by Linda Arroyo

Based on the character created by Will (The Spirit) Bisner and S.M. "Jerry" Igner in 1937, which appeared in comic book format from 1938 to 1953, and later a television series in the 1950s starring the fright-

Tanya Roberts

ening 6'1" Irish McCalla as SHEENA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE. Columbia Pictures's movie version is more updated with less violence and concern for endangered species. Tanya Roberts' role as Sheena was fine, if you didn't mind that she lived in the African plains without a dark tan. Sheena was a challenging character for the former plain Jane in CHARLIE'S ANGELS. Roberts spent nearly a year in acrobatic physical training for the part. She even did most of the stunts in the movie, which was pretty amazing! Sadly, Roberts' later roleplaying has been self-degraded (PURGATORY, INNER SANCTUM).

Ted Wass (from the fantastic hit series SOAP) plays the hunky TV sportscaster Vic Casey with his comedy relief cameraman Fletch Agronsky (Donovan Scott) from the jungle city known as The Big Apple (N.Y.C.). If this all sounds dull, it's because it is. Sheena is basically a jungle girl. Period! I'm bored just writing this review! Don't get me wrong; the film had good quality, but it was pretty slow and again, dull. So to close this review, before I doze off:

The story starts off when a young girl is left an orphan after the deaths of her parents. A Shaman (Princess Elizabeth of Tora) then raises the child she had named Sheena, teaching her the ability to communicate with the beautiful wildlife of Africa. A grown woman (revealing her best assets), Sheena's adventure begins after the Shaman's capture and subsequent death. One thing, which a lot of men would agree upon, being raised in Africa, Sheena should have her breasts exposed. But I won't excite you male readers! */Linda, don't be so hard on yourself! Have more confidence! How do you know you wouldn't excite at least a few male readers?! -DF/* The naive jungle warrior, to our standards, builds a relationship with Vic Casey venturing to protect her people. I wonder-- did Casey fall in love with Sheena before, or after the bathing scene (guys, if you haven't seen it, I bet you will now!)? Hunted by greedy Prince Otwani (Trevor Thomas) and the bitch Princess Zanda (France Zobda), Sheena, Vic Casey and her tribe end their plan to destroy the native lands. ** -Linda Arroyo

THE GREEN HORNET

Released by World Video, A Sil-Metropole Org. Ltd. Dist.;1994, Dir.: Lam Ching Ying, Cast: Chin Ku Lok, Kwan Wing Ho, Yu Wing Kwong & Lam Ching Ying, Reviewed by Doug Weldy

Ah, what the hell? The Green Hornet? Well, it's confusing, but let me see- he wears Kato's uniform which is all black. No green to be seen, not even his socks. The he is Ku Lok, playing the Gman. He kicks people around, in fact he almost seems to be someone else. Anyway, he skips around like, well, all that comes to mind is a flea or the way Jet Li would skip if he skipped in any Tsui Hark flick, and he kicks some ass.

This G guy lives in the country with two older men. They're just friends, I think. Underneath their house is a hide-out furnished with statues of all the generations of Green Hornets throughout China's history. One of the older men is played by Lam Ching Ying, who starred in MR. VAMPIRE III with Ku Lok.

The Hornet's main foes are Germans, recognizable only by the German cross the leader wears around his neck. The leader is also invincible. In one gun-battle, he walks in front of firing machine guns, like a superman. Cool fights with a corny love song gained this Hong Kong film three stars. *** -Doug Weldy

ROBOTRIX

{aka "Bustriod"} Produced by Golden Harvest (H.K.) in association with Shochiku (Japan) Films in 1991, Satrring: Amy Yip, Chikako Aoyama, Hsu Hsiao Dan, David Wu, Vincent Lyn, Rogar Thomas, Reviewed by Damon Foster

Busty Amy Yip looks awesome in the police station scene, where she stretches a tight pink tank-top, and is also seen in seductively silver dance attire, bra & garter belt, and a couple of sexy space-age amazon outfits (see this issue's cover). Although she seems to get top billing in this adult superhero thriller, she's actually more of a co-star in this Hong Kongese/Japanese, co-produced, exploitation film. Since portions of its budget was financed by Japan's Shochiku, Japanese actress Chikako Aoyama actually has a bigger part than Yip or Taiwanese politician-turned-actress Hsu Hsiao Dan, though anatomically, it's Amy Yip who has the bigger parts. I hope to see Chikako Aoyama in more films, at least from the neck up, I think she's prettier than Yip, Aoyama's hooters are almost as massive, and she's not afraid to show them off in a few bedroom scenes (for whatever reason, it's always more difficult to get Chinese actresses to strip than the more modern Japanese actresses).

I think there should be a lot more sex exploitation in ROBOTRIX, since that's really all it has going for it. I don't envy any guys who watched this one in the theater, this one can only be enjoyed in the privacy of your own bedroom. That is, unless you wear a trench-coat to the cinema; but then, look what happened to Peewee Herman. Without Yip's and Aoyama's ample assets, ROBOTRIX is nearly (but not entirely) worthless. With dynamic figures like that, I wonder why the moviemakers bothered having so many other characters in the flick, causing distractions; taking screen time from these two (I mean four) starlets. But seriously, the special effects are simple, the humor is predictable, the action staging is child's play, and the plot is thinner than an anorexic. Obviously, Yip is too unevenly proportioned to do any serious kung fu or stunts. Sometimes I wonder how she even manages to stand upright (but from what I hear, maybe standing up has very little to do with her rise to stardom. It wouldn't surprise me if she had to do a little "horizontal auditioning" to get into show-biz!).

But about ROBOTRIX, one of Yip's best (sad to say) films. It's kind of a crime drama, kinda' sci-fi, kinda' superhero. You could call it a "superhero film for adults" or a Chinese equivalent of a Russ Meyer film. Erotic at times, gory at others. It's similar to I LOVE MARIA (aka ROBOT FORCE), another HK robot adventure, except that ROBOTRIX actually has entertainment value. ROBOTRIX is pretty fun, what's not to like about exquisitely shaped amazons who battle to the death? Some of the costumes could be better, but otherwise, the special effects (especially the sets) are adequate.

Evil scientist Riuichi Yamamoto managed to turn himself into a powerful robot who terrorizes HK. So female cop Linda Lin (Chikako Aoyama), who also got turned into a robot, teams up with a fellow femme fatal cyborg played by Amy Yip. Also on hand is the brilliant scientist who creates most of these robots, played by Hsu Hsiao Dan. As good & bad androids clash, expect to see some blood (a hooker is brutally murdered in a club, a guy gets decapitated-- by a suitcase, of all things!) and violence, some

humor, some nudity and of course, a little romance. Without going needlessly into detail, let's just say that our team of heroines, assisted by detective David Wu, hopes to rescue some womanizing, Arab prince who was captured by the villain, and they succeed in their task. Stupid at times, not a great movie, but entertaining; that's for damn sure. ** -Damon Foster

EL MUNDO DE LOS MUERTOS

{"The World of the Dead"} Producer: Herberto Davila Guajarpo, Director: Gilberto Martinez Solares, Starring: El Santo, Blue Demon, Pilar Pellicer, Carlos Leon, Antonio Raxel, Guillermo Bianchi, Carlos Suarez, Mary Montiel, Betty Nelson, Eduardo McGregor, Ramiro Orsi, Marcello Villamez, Reviewed by Paul Schiola

This happens to be one of the odder Santo films, it starts out during the Inquisition with its floggings and folks being burned at the stake. And for those of you who didn't know, Mexican wrestlers lived back then, or at least one of Santo's relatives did! Yes, believe it or not, it's a stunning sight to see Santo wearing a long sleeve shirt with ruffles and long stockings, and a sword-- the whole get-up! I know El Santo means The Saint, but I had no idea how tight Santo is with the Catholic Church, he really gets his orders from a higher source. But wait until you see the "Blue Demon" summoned from hell by evil witches to combat the too-good Santo, which in my mind creates a rather disturbing dichotomy. I mean, they are rivals, but this is kind of taking it a bit too far. Well, not to worry, this "period piece" does not last too long before they had to take the costumes back (by the way, the Blue Demon looks the same as usual) and "Blam!" We are thrown back into the 1960s with Santo and babe at a happening party, dancing & drinking-- all looks normal until we realize that a curse from the past is affecting Santo in the worst way, in the squared circle (this is slang for wrestling rink, for the uninitiated). I am sure the script writer had to have seen the Mex-horror flick EL BARON DEL TERROR ("The Brainiac"; 1961) because it's pretty much the same concept (except no masked wrestlers, but it does have a cool brain-sucking monster).

I must mention the lack of continuity in several of the fight scenes: At one point Santo is thrown out a window in a modern apartment and is getting up outside what looks like an old west town set with wooden sidewalks and dirt roads. But on the other hand, the wrestling matches are some of the better I have seen which makes up for some of the inconsistencies.

The Blue Demon plays a rather muted role being a slave to evil and getting in the way of Santo but it turns out that he is not so bad when Santo has a dream/hallucination where he is chasing his girlfriend Elisha through a strange volcanic environment (shot through a red filter). Santo must fight off several specters/wrestlers and just when you think he has lost, out jumps Blue Demon and helps Santo kick ass and then helps Santo and Elisha escape this hellish place. It is, all in all, very convoluted and exciting, but really hard to follow. Check it out if you dare! *** -Paul Schiola

MESSAGE FROM SPACE: THE TV SERIES

{French title: SAN KU KAI, Japanese title: UCHU KARA NO MESSEJI: GINGA TAISEN-- aka SWORDS OF THE SPACE ARK} Based on Toei's theatrical movie MESSAGE FROM SPACE, Toei; 1978, 27 half-hour episodes, Special Effects by Nobuo Yajima, Starring: Hiroyuki Sanada as Hayato, Akira Oda as Ryu, Rio Nishida, Yoko Akitani, Shinzo Hotta, Jiro Shirai, reviewed by Damien Martinet (in France)

The Japanese series was released on video in France a long time ago and was shown many times from 1980 to 1986 on different channels. For once, all the episodes were shown. That's why I'm able to give you an almost-complete episode guide, although, unfortunately, I haven't got the Japanese titles and episodes #11 & #12 are missing...sorry! The French audience appreciated this series very much; cute FX, beautiful costumes, space battles, rubber monsters, marvelous karate fights. Great, five star (*****) stuff! Some comics about the series were also published as well as a "Panini" album with collectors cards to stick in it. Apparently, several of the space vessels also came out as toys and there were even Mardi Gras masks of the two heroes. According to me, this is one of the best space-superhero sci-fi series that Japan has ever made.

The series was shown under the name SAN KU KAI which in Japanese means, I think, Earth, Moon and Sun (not necessarily in that order!!). Hayato and Ryu have the same names as in the Japanese version, but the apeman is called Siman, not Baru. The little robot Tonto changes into Sidero, Sophia into Eolia, Kunoi into Furia, Gavanas into Stressos. The two villains with their superb costumes are Komenor and Volcor, and their emperor is called Golem XIII. MESSAGE FROM SPACE is very way out because of its references to STAR WARS (Ryu would be Han Solo and Siman a sort of Chewbaka), to samurai films, kung fu flicks, to FLASH GORDON...and the different stories are quite over the top. There are two parts in the series: Episodes #1 to #21 are about our heroes fighting rubber monsters and then from episode #22 there are chronological links between episodes which make them follow to the end.

Storywise, an evil empire known as Gavana (aka Stressos), led by a mysterious leader, Golem XIII, that nobody has ever seen, decides to conquer the 15th solar system. Hayato (aka Ayato), a young man, is flying aboard a cargo piloted by Ryu, from Belda, the second planet and by Siman (aka Baru) from Sheta, the third planet. Hayato is about to see his father who has told him to come home as soon as possible. When the cargo arrives on the planet Analis, they discover a holocaust and after many fights, the three young men escape from the planet. But they're traced by the admiral spaceship: The Cosmosaur which is commanded by Volcor. When their cargo is about to explode, Hayato, since

Hiroyuki Sanada kicks Gavana butt in MESSAGE FROM SPACE - THE SERIES!

he has lost his parents, sends his friends in escape capsules through space. Amazingly, Hayato discovers he's still alive, aboard a flying boat named L'Azuris. There he meets Eolia (aka Sophia) who gives him a new high-tech spaceship: The San Ku Kai, so he can fight the Gavana Empire. A few episodes later, Ryu & Hayato will suit up, when the situation gets urgent, as space ninjas: Starros and Phantom. *****

Here are the plots for the 27 episodes (except for #'s 11 & 12), of MESSAGE FROM SPACE and unfortunately I haven't got the Japanese titles as it's pretty difficult to get them. These are the French titles, translated into English:

1. THE SPACE SHIP

The evil Gavana empire attacks Analis, one of the three planets of the 15th Solar System. Hayato meets Eolia who gives him the San Ku Kai while his friends, Ryu and Siman, are flying through space.

2. THE NINJAS

Belda, the second planet, is attacked by the Gavanas and on the surface Hayato finds Ryu. They free Siman and Ryu wins a robot, Sidero (aka Tonto) in a contest. They meet Kamiji the leader of the resistence but, unfortunately, Kamiji is arrested and the episode ends with space battles.

3. THE EMISSARY FROM EARTH

In this episode, our heroes meet Voceane, an earthling who had come to see Hayato's long dead father. Voceane goes back to Earth so as to ask for help to fight Golem XIII.

4. HOPE

Hayato, Ryu and Siman decide to free Kamiji, who's being held prisoner in a camp. They manage to save him, but behind a plastic mask of Kamiji hides Furia, the Gavana villainous queen of disquise. Then Ryu changes into Starros, the space ninja, and saves the day. In this episode, Ryu and Siman meet the mysterious Eolia.

5. THE ABANDONNED SCHOOL

Ryu and Hayato save the teachers of a disused school whereas Siman gets hypnotized by Cyclotor and tries to kill Ryu aboard the San Ku Kai. With the help of Eolia, Siman wakes up and Ryu destroys the spaceship of Cyclotor.

6. GOLEM XIII, THE KING

Ryu disquises himself as a Gavana pilot but is arrested by Volcor and kept in a room where a giant statue of Golem XIII stands. Hayato and Siman fight Gavana henchmen who wanted to plant a bomb in the San Ku Kai and Siman finally rescues Ryu. The two friends change into Phantom and Starros and the space ninjas defeat the episodic monster.

7. THE CAMP

Ryu and Hayato meet Dan, a rebel, after having freed prisoners on Analis. Unfortunately, Dan is killed by the Rockman, a Gavana general, and during the funeral, the Space Ninjas are attacked by Gavana henchmen, led by Rockman. Phantom and Starros kill him and Dan's coffin will float forever in space.

8. AN OLD FRIEND

On Sheta, Siman finds an old friend who must capture Siman or his family will be killed. The apeman is drugged, the Squidtree kills his friend and takes Siman to a shuttle which contains simian prisoners. Hayato delivers Siman and the friends take the apemen back to their planet. The episode ends with the two jets from the San Ku Kai which destroy a Gavana defense tower.

9. THE DEVIL'S PALACE

Kamiji, the leader of resistance, and his friends attack the palace of Golem XIII with the help of Eolia. But her spaceship is hit and Kamiji, for a change, is captured, by Dark Man. Starros and Phantom battle with Darkman while L'Azuris is repairing herself. The monster is killed and Eolia returns to her own dimension.

10. DESTROY PLANET EARTH

Komenor wants to destroy the planet Earth and he captures Professor Artenos to build a spaceship containing a bomb able to destroy the Earth. Starros and Phantom destroy Algor, the Water-Man, and Artenos sacrifices himself by exploding his spaceship so as to save the Earth.

11. THE PRINCESS

{NOTE: This episode was not available for review.}

12. THE BIG BATTLE

{NOTE: Ditto.}

13. On the planet Sheta, Siman meets Dao, an old friend who steals the golden statue of the god Mythos to prevent the Gavanas from getting it. Illiade, a Gavana general, battles Starros and Phantom but is killed. Illiade dies but Dao is brought back to life by Eolia.

14. THE SECRET AGENT

On Sheta, Volcor discovers that an old man is in fact "the father of the ninjas" so he captures his daughter. He will give Iris back only if the old man fights Starros and Phantom. The old man transforms himself into "The Wings of Death" while Sidero frees Iris. Furia (aka Kunoi) is about to kill "The Wings of Death" when Eolia takes him and Iris aboard L'Azuris.

15. THE SAFEGUARD OF THE UNIVERSE

Leira, a girl, escapes from the Gavana's secret laboratory where the evil empire is making a deadly gas. She finds Hayato & Ryu and warns them about the deadly plot. Starros & Phantom will kill the episodic monster named Gorgonne and will stop the malicious plan.

16. THE TRAP

Starros & Phantom fight Tarantula, the spider-monster whose aim is to hypnotize a little girl to kill Hayato. The plan fails so the space ninjas rescue the little girl and kill Tarantula. A fantastic episode including hypnotism, secret passages, false identities, etc.

17. YOURS VAMPIRELY

Hayato lands with Katarina, a princess who was lost in space, on the planet Sharba that the Gavanas want to colonize to get its people's secret: A secret path to the Earth. During the night, the village is attacked by bats led by the queen of the bats. In fact, Katarina and the queen of the bats are the same person that the Gavanas transform using the diamond she weards on her forehead. With a sacred cloth and the energy of the diamond, she's saved from her double personality.

18. ESCAPE

On Belda, Taurodragus, a Gavana General, creates a school for new warriors. Momoshi, a pupil, escapes and asks Ryu & Hayato for help. They both suit up as Starros & Phantom and kill Taurodragus, although Momoshi didn't want to finish him off.

19. THE BIG DROUGHT

The San Ku Kai is badly damaged and Ryu and his friends go to the planet Sheto to find Meros, a technician who could repair the ship. The village is controlled by the gunfighter Ramplor so Ryu, Hayato, Siman and Meros help each other to defeat Ramplor after some western-ish gunfights. After that, the village is free and Meros repairs the San Ku Kai.

20. THE LEGEN OF L'AZURIS

An old legend terrorizes the people of Sheta, which says that a golden ship will appear when the sky becomes red. Ryu is attracted by the golden ship which appears and he meets Akila, an old friend. Akila is in fact the Star Knight, a Gavana agent but he's killed after refusing to kill Ryu.

21. THE CREATURE FROM OUTERSPACE

On Belda, a meteor becomes strangely a sort of squid which makes Eolia arrive. But in fact, it's a trap and Eolia can't return to her dimension. The squid monster tries to destroy the San Ku Kai but Starros & Phantom will defeat him.

22. THE POWER OF GOLEM XIII

Eolia, who can't return to her own dimension, is chased by the Cosmosaure, and she takes refuge in a lake. She meets the root people who don't let the Cosmosaure land. Eolia is safe and she's about to reveal who Golen XIII is, when they see the giant statue of the Gavana emperor. Then, Phantom & Starros battle henchmen & a monster and when they've won, the giant statue disapears so we are none the wiser about Golem XIII.

23. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PALACE

In this chapter, our heroes are captured by a ninja, but Starros and Phantom escape and they destroy the palace of Golem XIII after having battled henchmen and the episodic monster.

24. THE BIG COMET

The comet Zatan is about to destroy the planer Belda whereas Hayato goes to the ghost vault to know how to destroy Golem XIII. Hayato is told that 500 years ago, Golem XIII had come from another dimension and then had been defeated by the supreme weapon: Emeralida, the three stars. Starros & Phantom destroy the episodic ninja warrior.

25. THE END OF BELDA

Komenor decides to take the place of the tyrant Golem XIII and Hayato steals a giant spaceship to rescue the inhabitants of Belda, but it's too late. Fortunately, Eolia has the time to rescue the poor Baldaens. Hayato finally understands the meaning of the secret to destroy Golem XIII: Belda was called the Shining Star and it's one of the three stars necessary to destroy Golem XIII. The tyrant has diverted the comet to avoid being destroyed anymore.

26. THE SECRET

Before leaving the root people, The Princess Aurora gives Hayato the first star to replace Belda's: The Space Star. In this star, Hayato discovers a map which indicates where the two other stars are. He goes on Analis, where Kamiji has finally been killed and where Ryu battles Volcor. But when Hayato is about to leave the planet, Furia steals the two stars which she wants to keep. Golem XIII punishes Furia severely: He kills her. The tyrant orders Komenor to find the last star while he is teleporting Hayato inside the statue of stone. Golem XIII's seat turns and he sees the real face of the tyrant: Eolia!

27. THE VICTORY

Komenor finds the third star: The Human Star, while Eolia explains to Hayato that Golem XIII is Desmonia, her twin sister. Komenor manages to steal the two stars from Desmonia and the Gavana commander battles Starros & Phantom. Badly hurt, Komenor explodes but the three stars are in our heroes's hands. Eolia explains that Desmonia must be attracted into space in the middle of a triangle formed by the three stars. Nothing happens but Eolia says that she must die to destroy her sister. Then, Golem XIII, Eolia, L'Azuris and the Cosmosaur explode in the galaxy and our heroes are on Analis, peace has been restored to the fifteenth solar system.

LETTERS *cont...*

European stuff, either dubbed in English or French. Because of that, I saw a lot of things that have never been released in America, but were available in their French

(continued on page 36)

versions... I'm talking about Japanese films, Mexican films (Santo), and Italians (Hercules and Machiste) that never saw the big or small screens in America.

In the 1970s & 1980s I became aware of all the great stuff produced in Japan that didn't reach the North American shore. By the mid-'80s, I finally had my own great correspondent in Japan and started to really get into that stuff. I'm doing well in ULTRAMAN, I'm only however discovering the Kamen Rider series, after getting the last three films, KAMEN RIDER SHIN, and KAMEN RIDER ZETO. I've seen a couple episodes of KAMEN RIDER BLACK RX...that's it. Ahhh. I have so much more to learn.

In Mexican heroes, I have 44 Santo, plus some Blue Demon, Mil Mascaras and Son of Santo. As for Italian heroes, a dozen Hercules and some Maciste. Those are really difficult, they've been so screwed-up by American translations. Maciste has been redubbed Samson, Hercules, Atlas, Collosus, Goliath, Maxus, Son of Samson, Son of Hercules, etc. Fortunately the French versions are more faithful and I've been able to get some real information in French books of the cinema. In one word, I like heroes. And a mag on heroes is long overdue.

I almost didn't bought it when I saw your name in it, I didn't feel like reading a festival of profanities and insults ever again. I juggle with your mag in the store before buying it for the sole reason of the back cover. The nice color- full page reproduction of the Mexican poster of LUCHA A MUERTE. Color reproduction of Mexican posters is not something you can find everywhere. So I said even if I hate Damon's guts. That alone is worth buying it. I read it anyway, and was pleasantly surprised.

The nasty attitude which bugged me so much in OC was not as overdone in this mag. It was actually good to read and I'm not myself a cutesy pie type. Mags which everything has got to be nice, everything is pink and beautiful....NAH....That pisses me off. And I certainly agree with you a 100% on certain magazines that praises everything. Yeah, those over long synopsis are boring, useless and just prove that they had nothing to say on the subject, but did it anyway in order to improve their sales.

I myself wrote an Ultraman article for one of those magazines, called "Ultraman in America", unfortunately, I wasn't very nice with the American tampering of ULTRASEVEN and especially ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE INSULT (no wonder no magazine ever printed it). I actually re-wrote my article three times because I was so nasty towards that show, but even in my third re-write I couldn't give that show much praise....if any. Nobody picked up that show, which is the best thing that could happen to it; it deserves to be buried forever. As I am an amateur artist & writer, perhaps I could offer a few things once in a while, if you're interested! */I'm always interested in reviews & articles from anyone, in trade for credit and free copies of whatever issue your submission appears in. -DF/*

The way that you control your honesty in HOF is something which I can admire and will definately be a regular buyer of your mag. I'm interested in information, honest opinion is realy appreciated but if I may be so bold as to make a suggestion. I prefer that you talk about the things that you like rather than bashing what you dislike. However, I appreciate an honest slam down on something you dislike much more than an insincere ass-kissing of a bad-product. The issue of HOF has changed my mind about you, there is a potential to be more creative than destructive. I hope you improve in that direction. I'm not suggesting that you change what you are (no way), just that you channel your fiery passion to better ends.

Now, about Santo's "last films" EL PUNO DE LE MUERTE ("The Fist of Death"), and LA FURIA DE LOS KARATEKAS ("The Fury of the Karatekas"). I was surprised by your comments about "El Punto" being a re-release of "La Furia" with additional footage featuring the Son of Santo as Santo. Before answering that, I took the time to watch both films. And I don't believe that at all. First-- After watching my 44 Santo films (each film at least twice; some more than five times) I can tell when he is doubled by a stuntman. I can recognize the way he walks, jumps, punches & falls over (from 1958 to 1981). In 20 years his body had not changed that much, he did gain weight when he got older, yet he still was a magnificent athlete up to the day he retired officially (after his son took over in October 1982).

In my experience, those two Santo films are 99% Santo all the time, with perhaps a few (if any) stunts performed by stuntmen. If you see the two films of the Son of Santo, filmed at about the same time, you'd see how ridiculous it would be to see the skinny

20 year old son playing his 60 year old father. His body is very different from his father. Even today, the son doesn't have the same body language as the father. The Son's film SANTO LA LEYENDA DEL ENMASCARADO DE PLATA (1993) also does not have the son playing the father. Santo is played by Daniel Garcia, better known as Hurrican Ramirez (one of Santo's best friends among the wrestlers). The first time I saw the film, I could tell right away that this was not stock-footage or his son playing the father.

The worst case of Santo being doubled is in the 1974 SANTO EL MYSTERIO DE LA PERLA NEGRA. I'd say perhaps 20 to 30% of Santo's footage is fake. He's pretty obvious too, first with a mask that doesn't fit tightly. Second, other scenes have him wearing a gray mask instead of silver. He's also more muscular in the shoulders than Santo ever was. Besides that, Santo is doubled once in a while for dangerous stunts as are most actors. Some rare moments are in a few of his later films such as SANTO CONTRA EL ASSASINO DE LE TELEVISION (1979), where some scenes have Santo doing acrobatic flips in a way Santo never did even when he was younger. Doubled by his son, perhaps? In this case, I can't tell, those are long shots; the stunt guy is obviously thinner and younger! Until we clear those, I'm willing to bet that this is not the case for Santo's last two films.

Santo does make a final cameo appearance in SON OF SANTO and CHANOC VS. THE VAMPIRIC ASSASSINS (1982), what an awful film. It makes his son's films look good. The prologue of the film has Santo passing the mask and the task of being a legend to his son. They hug each other and we can see that Santo is actually taller and bigger than his son. Fortunately, Sonny-Boy is bigger and better today as a wrestler. As an actor, he has not improved much, he still makes his father look like Robert Deniro by comparison. Boy, does he suck hard! By the way, the copyrights of both "el Puno" and "La Furia" are both 1981. If one was put together after Santo's death in 1984-- legally speaking, I believe it would have to be copyrighted 1984 or '85. Especially since it has new footage, new editing and basically is supposed to be a different movie, am I right?? *[What are you asking me for?! I'm just typing up your letter for Mexi-hero experts to read, I haven't a clue as to what you're writing about! -DF]*

Your review of NEUTRON VS. DR. CARONTE was fun. You've not been lucky, of the four Neutron films dubbed in English. You said he made six? I'm aware of only five; they're: NEUTRON THE BLACK MASK (1960), NEUTRON VS THE DEATH ROBOTS, NEUTRON VS DR. CARONTE, NEUTRON VS THE MANIAC (1964), and NEUTRON VS. THE KARATE ASSASSINS (I never heard about that last one being dubbed in English). NEUTRON VS. DR. CARONTE is the weakest of the four I've seen. The fact that you have not seen the two first ones didn't help. Those three are a trilogy, directly linked together like a serial. As a matter of fact, I'm sure they were all shot back-to-back as one production. The unmasking of Neutron as the TV newscaster was just a device to throw fans off-base for a few minutes as we all knew that Wolf Rubinski was in reality Neutron (Charles in the alter-ego). As you ever saw the other films, you really were put on a spin by that "Charles in Action Without The Neutron Suit" in the finale.

For some good kick-ass action, I recommend you see the second one, NEUTRON VS. THE DEATH ROBOTS, it's the best of the entire series.

Andre Dubouis
Canada

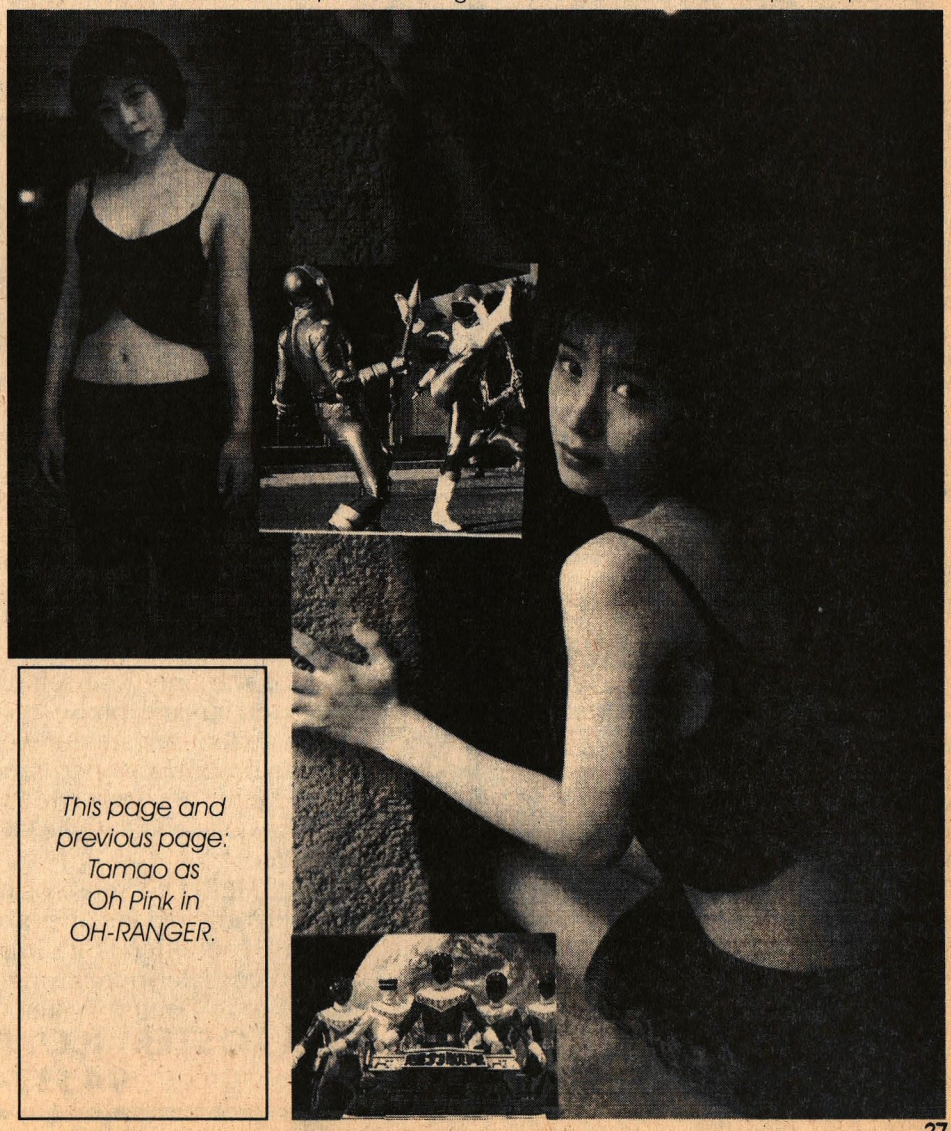
Dear Damon,

Ed's address does indeed change more than Madonna's hairstyle (although I really wish you would have picked a less asinine personality to make an analogy with). However, MONSTER ATTACK TEAM now (finally) has a P.O. Box, which will most definately not change, we swear to God and hope to watch SAILOR MOON. Please pass this along to your readership: Monster Attack Team, P.O. Box 821631, Ft. Worth, TX 76182-1631. Please also remember to mention that all checks/money orders should be made out to Edward Holland, as M.A.T. does not have an account.

In HOF#2 you asked about a show called PHOTON. The show was basically made to sell a product - a laser tag-type game. There were also Photon amusement centers/ obstacal courses that existed which were pretty much the forerunners of today's paint ball centers. Several episodes featured cast members playing at these centers during leisure time.

Michael Keller
TX., U.S.A.

Man, is HOF a pain to find in Denver, a friend told me he saw it and it took me four weeks to get a copy, which was at a "hipster" book/coffee-shop in the suburbs, but it was worth the search; on the other hand, OC is much easier to find. *[It's too bad HOF is so difficult to locate! I try my best, and try to keep enough mainstream-related material in it, so that more stores will pick it up. Need-*



This page and previous page: Tamao as Oh Pink in OH-RANGER.

less to say, HOF doesn't sell as well as my other zine, unfortunately. In fact, HOF really only seems to break even, there's not much of a profit (it sure as hell hasn't put food on my plate) to it. Hence the newsprint quality paper now, we had to take the quality down a few notches just to keep it afloat. -DF/

Hey, a bit of info I stumbled onto, about Neutron: I found out that his movies (I am not sure if all of them) were originally serials not unlike U.S. ones like FLASH GORDON and BUCK ROGERS. The Mexican Neutron films were then spliced into the U.S. features.

Paul Schiola
Colorado

Greetings. I picked up your periodical at the local Tower Records out of shameless need to indulge my fascination for Japanese live action sci-fi. It is rare indeed to find a magazine or book that contains information such as yours in English. The ones that I do find filled with lavish color photos are all in Japanese and a bit costly, although because it is imported from a country with little or no natural recources left I understand. I enjoyed your magazine greatly and was thrilled with the issue of the various heroes of different countries. It's amazing how many of them are influenced by either American or Japanese films. I hope to be able to pick up your magazine again, which leads me to my only gripe, that being the irregular publishing times. */Yep, I have that gripe too! But unless HOF becomes more commercially successful, it can't be more accessible or punctual. I hope all HOF fans will get their friends and fellow hero fans together and urge them to support this unique publication. With more buyers & subscribers, this zine could become one serious asskicker of a magazine! -DF/*

Roger Chang
California

KAMEN RIDER CONT...

Black RX's unique ability to change into two other Kamen Riders. Depending on what kind of situation he's involved in and/or what kind of episodic monster he's tangling with, different types of Riders are required. So he can become either Bio Rider or Robo Rider (no relation to America's "Robo Rider", actually Shadow Moon in Japan). This adds extra amusement to the show, even if it's just a pathetic gimmick to sell more overpriced toys.

The script deals with the further adventures of the ever frantic Kotaro Minabi (again with Tetsuro Kurata). He wiped out the older villains Golgom from the previous series, but now there's a new army of monsters, demons & robots at large, called Crisis. They decide to change Kamen Rider Black/Kotaro into another of their soldiers, but as always, history repeats itself-- their plan backfires. Kamen Rider Black becomes the new incarnation, Kamen Rider Black RX; he may look a little different, but he's basically the same hero as before.

Nearly a decade after this series aired in Japan, Saban bought the rights to cut it up and edit it into the vastly inferior attrocity, MASKED RIDER, now contaminating a TV set near you. **

AITOKIB ONO ODORA
KAMEN RIDER SUPER 1 #32 *[6/11]*
F.S.: *Flashback.*

Kamen Rider Black RX's duel with a walking pyle-of-rocks is pretty lame, but is nothing compared to the cliche-ridden, predictable subplot about little girl Mika (she's got some power so the baddies want her) and her doll. If they can't get kiddies who know how to act, they should not use them at all! She makes me almost respect that Mockley Kockley Wockley kid from HOME ALONE. Also watch for a stupid continuity flaw: Kotaro falls into a hole and his motorcycle helmet just seems to disapear (great editing, huh?!). 1/2 -DF

/Note: There was indeed at least one other Kamen Rider production in the 1980s, a "theatrical episode" which featured a team up between Kamen Rider Black, Kamen Rider Black RX, Bio Rider and Robo Rider (all four were originally the same character, but some sort of "split" occured to separate them into separate entities. Unfortunately, the flick wasn't available for review at the time of this writing. So ends another edition of "Kamen Rider Report".

STILL AVAILABLE: Videos (VHS only).....

AGE OF DEMONS- Amateur video shot on a camcorder! A remotely coherent plot combines horror, comedy, large breasted females, sci-fi, punk rock, fantasy, and martial arts. Cast: Butch Portillo, August Ragone, Eric Matson, Damon Foster, Perry Wong, Becca Torez, Rajar Shy, John Grace, DRAGON FROM RUSSIA star Anthony Houk, and Penthouse Playmate Tammie Costas! For Adults only! PRICE: $15.00

HOT DOGS ON THE RUN- Incredibly amateur video shot on a broken camcorder! Made for no money at all, this cheap farce spoofs old martial arts films. Satirical characters include: Bruise Lee, Kwai Chung King, Toshiro Katsu, The Karate Dude (Ralph Macho), Wacky Chan, Billy Jerk, 'Jig' Kelley, and a special appearance by the Mexican wrestler: El Burito Negro! PRICE: $10.00

ADVENTURES OF MYSTERON- Pennyless skits intended for Community Access cable, about a masked wrestler tackling secret agents, ninjas, aliens, a werewolf, thugs, and whatever other laytex masks we found lying around. PRICE: $10.00

DAMON FOSTER'S WEIRD VIDEOS- A collection of DF's older productions. Some are funny, some are offensive, and some are boring--for DF completists only. PRICE: $10.00

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•FINAL DISCLAIMER- DF's sense of humor has offended people before, and these videos and old fanzines are no exception. Though the intention is to amuse (not offend), it's important that only those in the right frame of mind consider purchasing these products.

Make checks out to Damon Foster.

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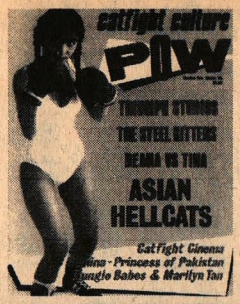

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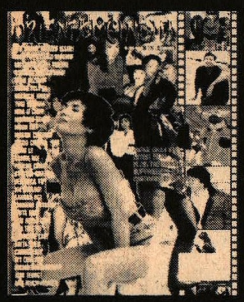

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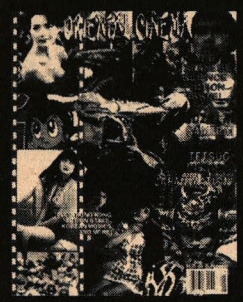

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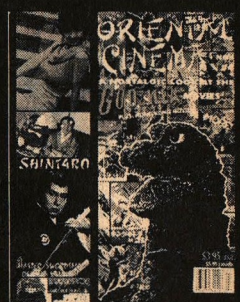

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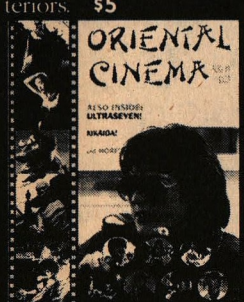

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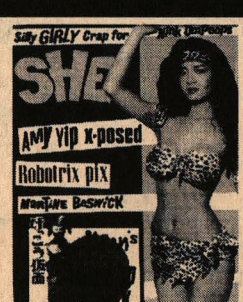

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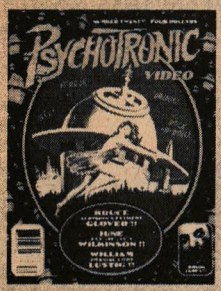

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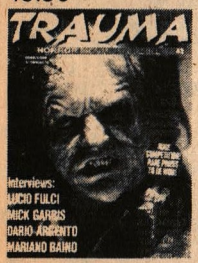

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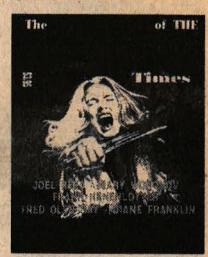

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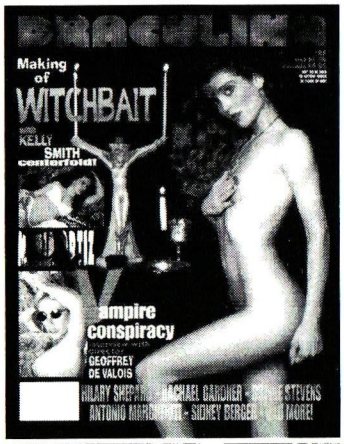

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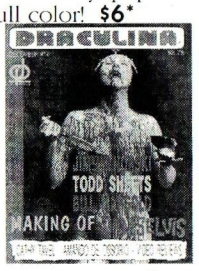

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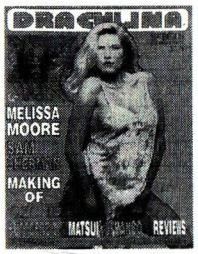

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